

Hafa Adai!

Legislative Bureau needs \$4.17M allocation for FY 2024. **PAGE 2**

SBA Guam official visit SBDCN; Advisory Council members named. **PAGE 6**

\$1

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ADVOCATES FOR THE CNMI'S YOUTH

Supporting agencies and members of the community gather with the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs, Child Protective Services, and the Division of Youth Services for the proclamation designation of April as Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention and Awareness Month yesterday at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe. **Story on Page 2**

CHRYSTAL MARINO

Medical Referral deficit at \$300K

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The former Medical Referral program, now known as the Health Network Program, already has a deficit of \$3 million just a little over halfway through the fiscal year and that deficit continues to grow.

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., who now handles the HNP program, has requested more than \$3 million for operations for the second quarter of fiscal year 2023.

During a press conference last week, CHCC chief financial officer Perlita Santos shared that the HNP program has already incurred over

See **MEDICAL** on Page 4

Review of revised budget bill done



Babauta

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Senate Fiscal Affairs Committee finished late afternoon yesterday adopting the proposed changes to a House of Representatives bill that would amend the fiscal year 2023

appropriations and budget law (Public Law 22-22) to reflect revised projections.

Sen. Celina R. Babauta (D-Saipan), who is a member of the committee, said they went over Schedule A of the bill, which is the distribution of funds

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Palacios, MVA execs woo Japan market

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE** and **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTERS

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and ranking Marianas Visitors Authority officials are in Tokyo, Japan, this week for a three-day visit to meet with high-level Japanese govern-

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Gov. Arnold I. Palacios met with Japanese Minister of Defense Yasukazu Hamada in Japan Monday as part of the CNMI's efforts to strengthen government partnerships and expand the Japanese tourism market to the CNMI.

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Taiwan rejects China pressure ahead of House speaker meeting

By **HUIZHONG WU**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP)—Taiwan remained defiant ahead of the island president's expected meeting with the U.S. House speaker on Wednesday, after China threatened retaliation multiple times in the past week.

Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen has been visiting the island's remaining diplomatic allies in Latin America, Belize and Guatemala. The most politically sensitive part of her

trip will be the meeting with U.S. House Speaker Kevin

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'TOUCHBACK' COUNTDOWN

Days until
'touchback rule'
takes effect on
Sept. 30, 2023:

178

INSIDE



BUSINESS

JTM Saipan is reviving the menu of an old favorite after opening JTM Snack Bar & BBQ Grill.

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NATION

Former President Donald Trump will surrender today to face criminal charges in court.

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LIFE & STYLE

More than 25 years after making it in Hollywood, Ben Affleck and Matt Damon are once again a team.

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Local

Legislative Bureau needs \$4.17M allocation for FY 2024

» **CNMI Youth Congress needs \$49,638 for 1 personnel, operations for FY 2024**

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie.delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Legislative Bureau and the CNMI Youth Congress will need \$4.17 million and \$49,638, respectively, in fiscal year 2024, according to Legislative Bureau director Perry John P. Tenorio.

In his budget proposals for the bureau and youth congress budget for fiscal year 2024, Tenorio said that the bureau will need \$2,070,353 for 34 personnel, \$1,922,092 for operations, and \$180,000 for utilities, for a total of \$4,172,445.

The CNMI Youth Congress, on the other hand, will need \$42,138 for one personnel and

\$7,500 for operations, for a total of \$49,638.

Early last month, Virginia C. Villagomez, who is the special assistant for the Office of Management and Budget, issued a budget call to all expenditure authorities to submit their proposed budget and spending plans for fiscal year 2024.

With respect to the Legislative Building itself, Tenorio said the building has undergone little change over the years—despite its historical significance—and is now showing signs of wear and tear. He said as a building ages, the need for repairs and maintenance only grows.

While building a new facility would be the ideal solution for the Legislature, Tenorio said that limited funding makes this impossible at this time.

As such, he said, the allocated budget of \$100,000 for re-

pairs and maintenance is necessary to ensure the continued functionality and longevity of the building.

Tenorio said the Legislature has estimated utility costs at \$180,000, enabling them to maintain a suitable working environment.

He noted that the utilities allocated for the general fund have been significantly underfunded over the past two fiscal years. Fortunately, in fiscal year 2022, the American Rescue Plan Act allocation to the Legislative Bureau was available to address this deficiency, he said. However, he said, there is uncertainty about the availability of funds for the bureau in fiscal year 2023, as a recent communication with Tracy B. Norita, the acting Department of Finance secretary, indicates.

This could mean that the availability of federal funds for

utilities for fiscal year 2024 is highly unlikely, Tenorio said.

He said the Legislature building requires continued maintenance to ensure a safe working environment for members and staff.

Tenorio said their immediate needs include the completion of the standby generator and a new, efficient heating, ventilation, and air condition-

ing system, which were part of the ARPA expenditure plan. He said there is now uncertainty on the availability of funds for the bureau to complete these projects.

In October 2021, Tenorio said, an emergency purchase of a 20-ton HVAC system was required, costing approximately \$185,000. He said their outdated HVAC units

require increasing reliance on air-conditioning technicians, and their malfunction is not a matter of if but when, necessitating costly repairs or replacements.

Tenorio also announced that their spending plan has been successfully entered into the government's new financial management information system, Munis.



Tenorio

Advocates gather in fight against child abuse and neglect



CHRYSTAL MARINO

Department of Community and Cultural Affairs Secretary Mary Margaret Sablan, Department of Youth Services' Vivian Sablan, and students Izeiah Deleon Guerrero, Margarette Claveria and Razielle Sobremisana look on as Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang signs the Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention and Awareness Month proclamation yesterday at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe.

By **CHRYSTAL MARINO**
chrystal_marino@saipantribune.com
CORRESPONDENT

Participating agencies and community advocates packed the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center yesterday to help raise awareness and advocate against child abuse and neglect in the CNMI, as Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang signed a proclamation that designates April as Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention and Awareness Month.

The occasion also brought to the forefront sobering national statistics about child abuse, with 600-plus children being abused every year, with 618 cases reported in 2020. Federal data acknowledges that this number may be incomplete and likely underreported.

Apatang said, "It is our collective duty to put a stop to child abuse and neglect. It is our collective duty for justice to be served at the toughest level against offenders. No offender should get a second chance and no first defender must be allowed to walk away...when a child has suffered at his or her hand."

Yesterday's ceremony was attended by representatives of the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs, Division of Youth Services, Child Protective Services and the Department of Public Safety, the Office of the Attorney General, the Northern Marian-

as Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, the, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., Northern Marianas Protection and Advocacy Systems Inc., Disability Network Partners, CNMI Public School System and other community partners.

Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred Ada of the CNMI Public School Systems, who gave the welcoming remarks, encouraged the community to step out and be a child advocate.

"...Preventing abuse and neglect goes way beyond all levels of government. It takes a whole community. ... Preventing child abuse is an effort that all of us must take on as one family. This means that our schools, our neighborhood, [and] our community must look after each child as if they were our own because we all have a role to play. Everyone in our community must partner together to provide a safe and nurturing environment for all our children. I challenge all of us to take action. We can do this by challenging our cultural and traditional excuses and practices. We can do this by supporting parents...and teaching them the positive ways of disciplining children. We can do this by reporting any abuse to the proper authorities."

Police detective Shannon Dela Cruz of the DPS Crimi-

nal Investigation Division said she became a police officer to be a voice for child victims. "And to be someone I wish I had when I was a victim. So I'm glad that I'm able to assist victims that have kept quiet. I get to be their voice."

She said that when she first spoke about her sexual abuse, nothing was done. "Instead I was blamed. I ask the community to believe and support when someone is sharing their abuse, instead of protecting the perpetrator or blaming the victim. ...No one should be robbed of their innocence."

As one who has worked with and witnessed many of these heartbreaking cases, OAG Criminal Division chief Chester Hinds said the No. 1 step is to "believe them." "When we're talking about our children, we need to support them at home. ...Even prosecuting cases without family support is very tough. Because prosecuting cases is a long process, so if a child is willing to go through this process by themselves, we have to believe where they are coming from. We have to believe the allegations. And sometimes they might be the only witness. We still have to believe them."

The theme in the CNMI's fight against child neglect and abuse this year is 'Building together: Prevention in partnership.'



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CNMI sets 'zero waste' goal for solid waste management

By **CHRYSTAL MARINO**
chrystal_marino@saipantribune.com
CORRESPONDENT

A visiting group of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency officials from Region 9, led by Region 9 administrator Martha Guzman, witnessed the CNMI kick off its zero-waste visioning meeting last March 30, at Kensington Hotel Saipan's Queen's Hall in Marpi, which outlined the steps the CNMI need to make to achieve "zero waste."

At the same occasion, Gov. Arnold Palacios and Lt Gov. David M. Apatang signed a proclamation designating March 27, 2023, to April 2, 2023 as CNMI Zero Waste Week, as part of efforts to improve and make waste disposal in the CNMI more efficient. Palacios and Apatang were



Gov. Arnold Palacios signs the CNMI Zero Waste Week proclamation at the CNMI Zero Waste Visioning Kickoff last March 30 at Kensington Hotel Saipan.

joined at the kickoff meeting by Office of Planning and Development's acting director

Christopher Conception, lawmakers, Saipan Mayor Ramon "RB" Camacho, Tinian Mayor

Edwin P. Aldan, and other OPD and Cabinet members.

The proclamation states that

the Commonwealth is committed to taking the necessary action and expanding efforts to ensure wise resource use and combating climate change by reducing reusing and recycling waste, "which will create more jobs for our people and unlock economic development opportunities here in our island."

Since 2020 the CNMI's Interisland Solid Waste Management Task Force, supported by the EPA, aims to have a comprehensive integrated solid waste management plan that includes "zero waste" initiatives, and should be ready for incorporation into the next updated version of the CNMI's Comprehensive Sustainable Development Plan on or before 2025.

It was said that Tinian is already leading efforts to assess and implement zero waste management opportunities in order protect their environment and population and support growth.

Palacios encouraged members of the community to take part in efforts to achieve zero waste in the Commonwealth. "...This week we affirm our commitment to working toward more sustainable production consumption and disposal practices and create a healthier and cleaner CNMI," said Palacios

The CNMI's Interisland Solid Waste Management Task Force, which hosted the event, is a combination of agencies in the CNMI including the Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality, Department of Public Works, offices of the mayors in Saipan, Tinian, and Rota, Department of Public Works and the Office of Planning and Development.

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High surf, rip currents seen until Friday

A high surf advisory in effect until 6pm Friday and there is a high risk of rip currents through Friday afternoon.

Based on the information received from the National Weather Service in Tiyan, Guam, and compiled at the CNMI Emergency Operations Center State Warning Point, large breaking waves of 7 to

9 feet are expected to increase to 10 to 12 feet today until 6pm Friday.

For the high rip current risk, dangerous rip currents are expected in north and west facing reefs of Tinian and Saipan through Friday afternoon.

A large north swell will enter the area and generate hazardous surf on north and

west facing reefs.

These will create dangerous swimming and surfing conditions and localized beach erosion. Rip currents can sweep even the best swimmers away from shore into deeper water.

On Rota, a high surf advisory is in effect from 6am Wednesday to 6pm Friday. There is also a high risk of rip currents in north and west facing reefs of Guam and Rota from Wednesday morning

through Friday afternoon.

Inexperienced swimmers should remain out of the water due to dangerous surf conditions. The public is advised to stay out of the water along north and west facing reef lines. Swim near a lifeguard. If caught in a rip current, relax and float. Don't swim against the current. If able, swim in a direction following the shoreline. If unable to escape, face the shore and call or wave for help. (PR)

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www.dps.gov.mp

Kilili: Report says Republican debt crisis imperils NMI

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie.delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Citing information compiled by staff of the U.S. Congress Joint Economic Committee Democrats, Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP) said over the weekend that it may seem like someone else's problem, but U.S. House of Representatives Republicans' continuing inaction to raise the debt ceiling will have deeply damaging effects on Marianas

residents.

Sablan said in his *e-kilili* newsletter that without an increase in the amount it can borrow, the federal government will be unable to pay for debt already incurred, putting at risk the \$2.7 million Social Security payments that go each month to 3,500 people in the CNMI.

"Health benefits for our 26,000 Medicare and Medicaid recipients are also in jeopardy," he said.

The delegate said interest rates will

rise if the U.S. defaults on its existing debt, adding to inflation.

According to Sablan, Republicans say they want the debt increase to be tied to spending cuts.

He said President Joe Biden asked for a detailed proposal before Congress left for its Easter recess, which has now begun.

A longer version of this story is available at www.saipantribune.com

Dementia support group set to receive legislative updates, April sessions set

In two online dementia support group sessions in April, Senator Amanda L. Shelton will present the latest work being conducted by the Guam Legislature's Committee on the Advancement of Senior Citizens. Her presentation—"Legislative Updates from the Committee on the Advancement of Senior Citizens"—is part of the ongoing online support groups for family caregivers of persons with dementia being conducted by the Guam/Micronesia Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program of the University of Guam School of Health.

Shelton is the legislative secretary

of the 37th Guam Legislature and chairwoman of the Committee on the Advancement of Senior Citizens. The senator will be available after her presentations to answer questions from the group participants.

The public is invited to tune in to either of the following sessions:

- 6pm–8pm, Wednesday, April 19, or
- 10am–noon, Saturday, April 22

Also in April, members of the community can receive training in how to care for a family member with dementia through the CARES Dementia Care for Families Training and Certification Program. CARES De-

mentia Care for Families is an award-winning program developed specifically for those caring for a loved one living at home. It has four modules: (1) Understanding Memory Loss; (2) Living with Dementia; (3) Using the CARES Approach; and (4) Keys to Success with CARES. Participants who complete the four modules will receive a certificate of completion and will be eligible for CARES Dementia Certification. (PR)

A longer version of this story is available at www.saipantribune.com

TAIWAN

From Page 1

McCarthy in Los Angeles while she transits on her way back home.

The visit—while important for Taiwan in demonstrating its overseas support—is fraught for both Taiwan and the U.S. because China views Taiwan as its territory and treats any dealings between U.S. and Taiwanese officials as a challenge to its sovereignty.

Belize and Guatemala represent

two of Taiwan's 13 formal allies across the world, a number that has dipped as China has put pressure on and funneled money into isolating the island. Tsai's Latin American trip comes just a week after Honduras announced it was cutting ties with Taiwan in favor of China, potentially prompted by a \$300 million hydroelectric dam project in central Honduras built by a Chinese company.

Last week, and again on Monday, China threatened with countermeasures if Tsai met with McCarthy.

The Chinese Consulate in Los Angeles issued a statement Monday saying it opposed any "any form of contact" between Taiwan authorities and the U.S.

"The reality and current situation that both sides of the (Taiwan) Strait belong to one China is very clear," the statement said.

A spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said at a daily news briefing Tuesday that China "will closely follow the developments and resolutely defend national sovereignty and territorial integrity."

PALACIOS

From Page 1

ment representatives, travel representatives, airline representatives, and other travel-related organizations to further strengthen the recovering Japan tourism market.

Saipan Tribune learned that the governor, along with MVA board chair Gloria Cavanagh, board member Chris Nelson, MVA acting managing director Judy Torres, and other CNMI government officials flew last Monday morning to Tokyo. They are expected to fly back to Saipan tomorrow, Thursday.

According to Richard Enrico R. Balears of the Office of the Governor's information office, the governor is scheduled to meet with the representatives of the U.S. Embassy in Japan; Japan Association of Travel Agents; Japan Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transportation, and Tourism; Japan Airport Terminal Company executive vice president; Deputy Minister of Economy, Trade, and Industry; various travel agents and travel representatives; travel agency JTB Corp., travel agency H.I.S. Co. Ltd.; United Airlines; Skymark Airlines; and Rakuten Travel Organization. Palacios and his team will also be attending a Marianas Tourism meeting set for

today, Wednesday.

One of the meetings Palacios has already had was with Japan Minister of Defense Yasukazu Hamada.

Balears said the brief visit to Japan emphasizes Palacios' and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang's commitment to working with the Japanese government and travel partners to help increase the number of visitors from Japan to the CNMI.

Palacios will be sharing the highlights from his meetings with the different agencies and agents throughout the week.

Since landing in Japan, the group has had a meeting at the U.S. Embassy in Japan, followed by a meeting with officials of the Japan Association of Travel Agents at their headquarters.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, Palacios wrote Adm. John Aquillino, commander of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, that his administration is committed to advancing U.S. national interests in the Pacific region, which includes pivoting away from the CNMI's reliance on its Chinese tourism market.

"My administration is very much committed to the U.S. national interests in our region and will do what we can to advance these interests as geopolitical tensions continue to heighten. Part of this commitment includes

the CNMI's pivot away from its reliance on the Chinese tourism market, which comprised more than 50% of our tourism base (about 200,000 visitors pre-pandemic)," he said.

In place of the Chinese market, Palacios says his administration is working on strengthening and further developing the tourism pipelines from American allies like Japan and South Korea.

"This will take time. The loss of the Chinese market has had considerably adverse economic and financial impact on the Commonwealth. This loss, which represents a sizable portion of our tourism revenue, contributes to vulnerable economic conditions that in the past have been exploited by the Chinese Communist Party to the detriment of the United States' interest in the region," said Palacios.

In addition to strengthening tourism with U.S. allies, Palacios said his administration is currently in the works of developing an entirely new tourism market; military families.

The decision to develop military tourism comes after the recent relocation of over 5,000 military personnel from Japan to Guam.

"We have to start helping ourselves to that market and start developing that market," Palacios said in a previous interview.

Democratic Party sets general membership meeting

The Democratic Party of the Northern Mariana Islands invites its Democratic family, prospective Democrats, and interested individuals to its general membership meeting scheduled for Saturday, April 15 at 10am at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe.

This meeting is open to all, and those interested in becoming members of the party are invited to attend.

At this meeting, the party will hold an election for the members of the party's Central Executive Committee,

the governing body of the Democratic Party of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Candidates for the Central Executive Committee must be registered with the party and must reside in the election district they will represent. Nominations will be valid only if accepted by the nominated candidate. Interested individuals can register to become a party member today by visiting www.nmidems.org. The party's registration and proxy registration forms can be submitted online but will also be available on-site. (PR)

REVIEW

From Page 1

for different operations.

"We're done adopting our changes. [The] fiscal analyst has to prepare the documents," Babauta said.

Last March 17, the House unanimously passed House Bill 23-31, House Substitute 1, which would repeal and re-enact the budget law for fiscal year 2023. House Ways and Means Committee chair Rep. Ralph N. Yumul (Ind-Saipan) is the author of the legislation.

Aside from committee chair Sen. Donald M. Manglona (Ind-Rota) and Babauta, the members who worked yesterday on the budget revision bill

were Sens. Paul A. Manglona (Ind-Rota) and Karl R. King-Nabors (R-Tinian). Committee vice chair Sen. Corina L. Magofna (D-Saipan) and member Sen. Dennis Mendiola (R-Rota) were absent this week.

The full Senate will then review and vote whether to adopt or not the product of the Fiscal Affairs Committee.

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios earlier asked the Legislature to revise the fiscal year 2023 budget, noting that just after the first quarter of fiscal year 2023, a large portion of the funds from the American Rescue Plan Act that were available for appropriation in fiscal year 2023 have already been expended and are no longer available for the rest of fiscal year 2023.

MEDICAL

From Page 1

\$300,000 deficit in the first quarter of fiscal year 2023 alone and this deficit only continues to grow.

"As of March 28, 2023, we're at a deficit of almost \$300,000. Everyday we're incurring costs, be it patient subsistence, hotel accommodation, or airfare and transportation. To date, we have not paid our vendors because we [CHCC] cannot afford to pay for that. We have been asking our vendors, politely, to wait for funding from our central government because we don't want HNP to be another unfunded mandate," she said.

Santos said the central government only appropriated \$700,000 for the program for the first quarter of fiscal year 2023. To date, that amount has already been expended, as well as the over \$11 million in federal funds (American Rescue Plan Act funds) that was appropriated to the program under the last administration.

"The original appropriation was \$1. [When] we requested for more money, only \$700,000 was allocated to the HNP program. \$700,000 is way below our requested budget. At our current number of patients, we would be spending roughly \$8 million only to cover airfare, accommodation, and subsistence and there are no other medical bills factored in here," she said.

In a previous press release from CHCC regarding the program, CHCC informed the public that the HNP is facing a critical funding crisis.

CHCC shared that, as Public Law 22-33 requires, on Jan. 31, 2023, the CHCC administration requested \$3,487,754 to operate the program in the current quarter. Since that request, however, CHCC has only re-

ceived \$700,000.

"The program must exercise caution in its expenditures while adhering to the regulations. Steps taken include clarifying ambiguities and updating the income eligibility, which determines who is eligible for benefits of the program—air transportation, accommodations, ground transportation, and subsistence," said CHCC.

CHCC stated in its press release that it had hoped to receive two years of adequate funding to turn the program around and bring sustainability to the program, which helps provide access to necessary medical services for individuals in the CNMI.

"CHCC has already implemented cost reduction strategies which have contributed to a nearly 34% decrease—from an annual expenditure of nearly \$17 million in 2019 to \$11.2 million in 2022 while still providing benefits to over 1,000 residents. Initiatives implemented require time and continued funding to obtain tangible outcomes. Some of the cost savings measures taken by CHCC since 2021 include improved coordination of benefits with insurance plans, particularly CNMI Medicaid, capped airfare, use of a company credit card to book flights, minimizing blocked rooms, and the utilization of ridesharing platforms such as Uber Health," said the press release.

"In the meantime, the CHCC urges the community to access primary and preventive care. Before requesting HNP support, know if you will qualify for HNP benefits and understand your options to access services. The HNP staff are available to answer questions and assist you with making appointments, which is open to all, even if determined to be ineligible to receive other benefits," said CHCC.

NMI joins national celebration of Autism Awareness Month

By **CHRYSTAL MARINO**
chrystal_marino@saipantribune.com
CORRESPONDENT

There are currently 191 students in both public and private schools in the CNMI who have been identified with autism spectrum disorder. Of that number 160 are boys and 31 are girls.

This was just one of the numbers cited in Monday's proclamation signing that designated the month of April as Autism Awareness Month. But beyond mere numbers, the proclamation stated that the month's observance seeks "to promote autism awareness, acceptance, inclusion, and self-determination for all and assure that each person with ASD is provided an opportunity to achieve the highest possible quality of life."

Toward this end, Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang was joined at the proclamation signing

last Monday at the Saipan World Resort Ballroom in Susupe by hundreds of family members, friends, advocates, and supporters to show their support and love for those in the community with autism.

One highlight of the event, just before the reading and signing of the proclamation, had several individuals with autism go onstage to share some words and their special knowledge with the audience.

The event was hosted through the partnerships of the agencies under the Disability Network Partners as well as the Autism Society of the CNMI, the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., the SRC and Unique Pieces in Different Colors CNMI.

The proclamation encouraged members in the community to get involved and participate in the upcoming activities that are helping raise

awareness and acceptance of those on the autism spectrum disorder, whether they are a child or an adult.

The proclamation also not-

ed that April 2023 is also recognized as National Autism Awareness Month.

"It's very important to raise awareness with autism, be-

cause the number of those under the spectrum continue to increase and we want to ensure that our community provides the support and ac-

ceptance so people never feel left behind," said Clarice DLG. Arriola, president of the Autism Society of the CNMI, after the signing ceremony.



EPA SITE VISIT

Martha Guzman, regional administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (Region 9) speaks prior to a tour of the Sadog Tasi wastewater treatment plant last March 30, 2023. Guzman requested the site visit to recognize the extraordinary work and efforts of the plant's operators, who have worked wonders to keep the treatment plants running considering difficult circumstances. EPA commended the management in place and is happy with the great progress in all areas.

cuc

USCIS issues policy update on filings that fall on Saturdays, Sundays, fed holidays

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services is updating its USCIS Policy Manual to address situations when the last day to file a benefit request or respond to a USCIS action falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or federal holiday. In these situations, USCIS will consider a filing or response submitted on paper timely if we receive it by the end of the next business day. While the receipt date will continue to reflect the date USCIS physically received the request, USCIS will consider the benefit request timely filed.

In some cases, benefit requestors must file a benefit request or submit a response within a filing period prescribed by statute, regulation, or form instructions. Examples include filing a paper-based benefit request on the last day before a requestor's or beneficiary's birthday or the last day of a qualifying time period for filing, or responding to a Request for Evidence or a notice of intent to deny,

rescind, revoke or terminate within the specified timeframe for a response.

This guidance will apply to all benefit requests and responses to Requests for Evidence and notices of intent to deny, rescind, revoke, or terminate pending or received by USCIS on paper on or after March 29, 2023. This update does not affect electronic filings or responses submitted electronically, which we consider received immediately upon submission. USCIS is not applying this policy retroactively.

In some cases, benefit requestors must file a benefit request within a filing period prescribed by statute, regulation, or form instructions. USCIS considers a benefit request "received" on the date we physically or electronically receive it. The agency is pursuing several ways to increase flexibility related to filing deadlines, including this Policy Manual update. (USCIS)

CUC ADVISORIES

Emergency water service interruption for the Dandan Tank

There will be an Emergency Water Service Interruption today, April 5, 2023, for the Dandan Tank Service Area, from 8am to 5pm, affecting the Tun Herman Pan Road (Airport Road), As Perdido, and Chalan Monsignor Martinez, from Shell Dandan to ABCD Market.

This will allow contractors of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. to connect the new 12" PVC distribution line to the tapping point at the Dandan Tank.

For the safety of our crew, motorists are advised to cautiously slow down while driving in the area. (PR)

Scheduled water service interruption in Marpo Valley, Tinian

There will be a scheduled water service interruption on Thursday, April 6, 2023, in Marpo Valley, Tinian, from 8:30am to 1pm, affecting customers residing in Marpo Valley, Tinian.

This will allow CUC's water crew to complete the repair of a 3-inch main waterline. (PR)

Castro seeks creation of CNMI Study-Abroad Scholarship

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Rep. Manny Gregory Tenorio Castro (Ind-Saipan) has introduced a bill that seeks to establish a scholarship for residents attending international colleges/universities or technical education programs.

The bill has been referred to the House Committee on Education, which Castro chairs. Several other representatives co-sponsored the legislation.

House Bill 23-32 will amend the Commonwealth Code to create the CNMI Study-Abroad Scholarship. According to the legislation, its purpose is to award scholarships to students who are attending an international uni-

versity/college or international technical training program to pay for costs directly related to the student's educational needs, including but not limited to tuition, textbooks and school supplies, transportation, and housing.

The amount allocated for each scholarship shall be up to \$6,000 for students attending any international institution or technical training program for a period of up to one year.

Castro pointed out in the legislation that colleges/universities and technical training programs across the globe provide unique perspectives on how to undertake various occupations in various

fields. Exposure to such foreign countries' perspective in different fields can be highly beneficial for the future development of the CNMI, he said.

He said the Study-Abroad Program is a program offered by various colleges to give chances to college students to pursue college

studies in a foreign country. Castro said this would be a great opportunity for CNMI residents to expand their horizons from either an educational or technical training standpoint.

He said it will be highly pertinent to provide a scholarship to such eligible individuals, provided that they return back



Castro

Name: Shanqin Cao
Address: Saipan, MP 96950
Phone: (670) 989-9629

Pro Se

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In Re the Matter of the Petition to Correct: FCD CN CIVIL ACTION NO. 22-0457

Shanqin Cao
Petitioner(s)

Notice is hereby given that the above-entitled matter is set for a hearing on May 8, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. in Courtroom 217A, before Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio.

Dated this 21st day of December, 2022.

Patrick V. Diaz
Clerk of Court
/s/
By: Deputy Clerk of Court

ROBERT T. TORRES, F0197
ATTORNEY AT LAW
Plata Drive
P.O. Box 500730
Saipan, MP 96950
Tel. (670) 234-7859
Fax. (670) 234-5749
E-mail: robert.torres@rttlawgroup.com

Attorney for Petitioners

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF GUARDIANSHIP FOR:

FCD GU CIVIL ACTION NO. 23-0109
NOTICE OF HEARING ON PETITION FOR APPOINTMENT OF LEGAL GUARDIANSHIP
K.P.T.: HEARING ON PETITION FOR APPOINTMENT OF LEGAL GUARDIANSHIP
Minor Child: DATE: May 1, 2023
By: TIME: 9:00 a.m.
DAVE MATAGOLAI and FRANCESCA T. MATAGOLAI: JUDGE: TERESA KIM-TENORIO
Petitioners: KIM-TENORIO

Notice is hereby given that on the date and time above set forth, the Court shall hold a hearing on the Verified Petition for Appointment of Legal Guardianship filed by Petitioners Dave Matagolai and Francesca T. Matagolai at the CNMI Superior Court, Guma Hustisia/Imwal Aweewe/House of Justice, in Susupe, Saipan, CNMI.

Dated this 16th day of March 2023.

/s/
Clerk of Court/Deputy Clerk of Court

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
RFP23-CHCC/MSO-009

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: APR 17TH, 2023 TIME: 10:00AM (CHST)

"PROCUREMENT OF GENERAL MEDICAL SUPPLIES-STOCK ITEMS"

INTERESTED PARTIES CAN DOWNLOAD THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FROM THE CHCC WEBSITE [WWW.CHCC.HEALTH]. ONCE AT THE SITE, NAVIGATE TO **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS** TAB ON THE LEFT NAVIGATION BAR. CLICK ON THE URL FOR THIS RFP. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO ENTER DATA TO ALLOW US TO TRACK ALL REQUESTS FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY.

THE CHCC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL PROPOSAL AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN ANY PROPOSAL, IF TO DO SO SHALL BE IN THE INTEREST OF THE CHCC. ALL PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OF THE COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION.

/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHCC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ CORA P. ADA
DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
RFP23-CHCC-011

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: APRIL 17th, 2023 TIME: 10:00AM (CHST)

"CHCC INPATIENT ROOM RENOVATIONS (COORDINATION, OVERSIGHT, MONITORING AND CONSTRUCTION) FOR CHC HOSPITAL / INPATIENT DEPARTMENT"

INTERESTED PARTIES CAN DOWNLOAD THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FROM THE CHCC WEBSITE [WWW.CHCC.HEALTH]. ONCE AT THE SITE, NAVIGATE TO **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS** TAB ON THE LEFT NAVIGATION BAR. CLICK ON THE URL FOR THIS RFP. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO ENTER DATA TO ALLOW US TO TRACK ALL REQUESTS FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY.

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/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHCC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ CORA P. ADA
DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY

SBA Guam official visits SBDCN; Advisory Council members named

The CNMI Small Business Development Center Network at the Northern Marianas College welcomed Ken Lujan, Small Business Administration Guam branch manager, on March 28, 2023, who was on-island to conduct a site cursory review in preparation for the CNMI SBDCN's Annual Site Review in July.

On March 29, 2023, the CNMI SBDCN also hosted its inaugural Advisory Council Meeting at the NMC board of regents conference room.

The site cursory review is facilitated on a semi-annual basis to evaluate the program in a customizable manner to assess programmatic areas such as existing procedures, the servicing and management of client profiles, and the budgeting and utilization of SBA funding. During the cursory review, Lujan provided in-person recommendations for CNMI SBDCN to work toward in preparation for the annual site review in July.

During his meeting with the NMC leadership team, Lujan shared his excitement on the formation of the new SBDCN team and how he was pleased with the progress the SBDC has made since becoming a network. Additionally, Lujan shared his appreciation with the NMC leadership for supporting the network and ensuring its success through their guidance and partnership.

"Every couple of weeks, the SBA meets with the SBDC regional state directors for its all-hands meeting. It's really exciting to hear about all the strides the CNMI is making in promoting entrepreneurship and supporting small



The CNMI Small Business Development Center at the Northern Marianas College welcomes SBA Guam branch manager Kenneth Lujan, second from left, for a Site Visit Cursory Review. Others in photo are, from left, Nadine Deleon Guerrero (CNMI SBDC network director); Cecilia Fitial (president, Commonwealth Women's Association); Dr. Barbara Hunter (interim director, NMC School of Business); Dave Guerrero (economic development manager, Commonwealth Economic Development Authority); Kioshi Cody (acting director of Economic Development, CNMI Department of Commerce); Roman Tudela (CNMI SBDCN marketing manager/outreach specialist); Charmaine Hofschneider (CNMI SBDCN administrative office manager); Mercilynn Palec (CNMI SBDC associate network director); Adelpha Magofna (CNMI SBDCN administrative office manager). Individuals who attended the meeting via Zoom are shown on the TV screen. They are, top row, from left, Benjamin Huk Borja (Tinian SBDC director/business adviser) and Phillip Mendiola-Long (president, Tinian Chamber of Commerce). Bottom row, from left, Allen Perez (chief of staff, Office of the Mayor of Tinian), Joe C. Guerrero (president, Saipan Chamber of Commerce).

businesses through training opportunities and events they host. There is no doubt the CNMI SBDC is making a positive impact in their respective communities," Lujan said.

The CNMI SBDCN also scheduled meet-and-greet sessions with some of the program's community partners such as the Commonwealth Economic Development Authority, the NMC leadership team, First Hawaiian Bank, the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, and the Department

of Commerce. It is the SBA and the SBDC's hope that these sessions will foster relationship efforts with resource partners to encourage partnerships and collaboration.

On Wednesday, March 29, the CNMI SBDCN hosted its inaugural advisory council meeting. The purpose of the council is to solicit feedback from its 10 members whose prominent presence in their respective businesses and community organizations will assist

the SBDC network best serve the community's needs and the needs of its CNMI SBDCN clients.

The following CNMI SBDCN Advisory Council members are:

Members representing Saipan:

■ Dr. Barbara Hunter (interim director, Northern Marianas College School of Business)

■ Cecilia T. Fitial (president, Commonwealth Women's Association)

Members representing

■ Dave Guerrero (Economic Development manager, CEDA)

■ Joe C. Guerrero (president, Saipan Chamber of Commerce)

■ John Z. Arroyo (president and CEO, Bank of Saipan)

■ Kioshi K. Cody (acting director of Economic Development, Department of Commerce)

Members representing

Tinian:

■ Allen Perez (chief of staff, Office of the Mayor of Tinian)

■ Phillip Mendiola-Long (president, Tinian Chamber of Commerce)

Members representing Rota:

■ Steven McCoy (president, Rota Chamber of Commerce)

■ Jacqueline Manglona (operations manager, Kin & Rit Enterprises)

The meeting consisted of Lujan and CNMI SBDC network director Nadine C. Deleon Guerrero discussing the purpose of the advisory council, Q&As with the council members, the setting of expectations of the council, and scheduling the next advisory council meeting.

During the meeting, CNMI SBDC associate network director Mercilynn K. Palec took the opportunity to formally introduce the CNMI SBDCN Team:

■ Benjamin "Huk" Borja (Tinian SBDC director/business adviser)

■ Diana Benavente Hocog (Rota SBDC acting director/business adviser)

■ Charmaine R. Hofschneider (administrative office manager)

■ Adelpha Lynn K. Magofna (administrative office manager)

■ Roman M. Tudela (marketing manager/outreach specialist)

Council members exchanged feedback overviewing how they see themselves working together alongside the CNMI SBDCN and the SBA for the betterment of the CNMI's business community. (NMC)



NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514

PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

NMHC hereby publicly discloses that on July 14, 2021, **Luise C. Villagomez**, an immediate family member of **Vioncee V. Reyes**, an employee of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation- CDBG-DR Program, applied for assistance under the Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Housing Program.

Said applicant has been determined to be a member of a group or class of low to moderate income individuals intended to be beneficiaries of the assisted activity and is applying to receive generally the same benefits being made available to the group or class. Ms. Reyes is not and shall not be involved in the handling of this loan application.

NMHC discloses this possible conflict pursuant to 24 CFR 92.356 in order to allow any interested persons to comment before the application is considered for an exception under the applicable conflict regulations.

Written comments may be faxed to Fax No.: (670) 234-9451, mailed to P.O. Box 500514 Saipan, MP 96950, or emailed to cnmi-cdbg-dr@nmhcgov.net on or before **Wednesday, April 5, 2023**.

Dated this 22nd day of March, 2023.

/s/
JESSE S. PALACIOS
Corporate Director



NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514

PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

NMHC hereby publicly discloses that on July 21, 2021, **Vincent M. & Rose Marie B. Pangelinan**, immediate family members of **Geraldine A. Borja**, an NMHC employee, applied for assistance under the Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Housing Program.

Said applicant has been determined to be a member of a group or class of low-income persons intended to be beneficiaries of the assisted activity and is applying to receive generally the same benefits being made available to the group or class. Ms. Borja is not and shall not be involved in the handling of this loan application.

NMHC discloses this possible conflict pursuant to 24 CFR 92.356 in order to allow any interested persons to comment before the application is considered for an exception under the applicable conflict regulations.

Written comments may be faxed to Fax No.: (670) 234-9451, mailed to P.O. Box 500514 Saipan, MP 96950, or emailed to cnmi-cdbg-dr@nmhcgov.net on or before **Wednesday, April 5, 2023**.

Dated this 22nd day of March, 2023.

/s/
JESSE S. PALACIOS
Corporate Director



NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514

PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

NMHC hereby publicly discloses that on February 23, 2021, **Estevan P. Cabrera**, a member of the 19th Tinian Municipal Council, applied for assistance under the Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Housing Program.

Said applicant has been determined to be a member of a group or class of individuals who meet the national objective of urgent need and intended to be beneficiaries of the assisted activity and is applying to receive generally the same benefits being made available to the group or class. Mr. Cabrera is not and shall not be involved in the handling of this loan application.

NMHC discloses this possible conflict pursuant to 24 CFR 92.356 in order to allow any interested persons to comment before the application is considered for an exception under the applicable conflict regulations.

Written comments may be faxed to Fax No.: (670) 234-9451, mailed to P.O. Box 500514 Saipan, MP 96950, or emailed to cnmi-cdbg-dr@nmhcgov.net on or before **Wednesday, April 5, 2023**.

Dated this 22nd day of March, 2023.

/s/
JESSE S. PALACIOS
Corporate Director

UOG to host pepper production workshop on April 15

Residents, farmers, and gardeners with a passion for peppers will have an opportunity to expand their knowledge

next Saturday, April 15. The Beginning Farmer & Rancher Development Program at the University of Guam's West-

ern Pacific Tropical Research Center is hosting a free pepper production workshop from 9am to noon at the University of Guam Agriculture & Life Sciences building, Room 127.

The focus will include not just hot peppers, but sweet peppers as well that can be successfully grown in Guam.

The workshop is being

organized by Dr. Robert Bevacqua, a horticulturalist whose experience with peppers includes work modernizing the New Mexico chili industry, promoting peppers as an alternative crop in Virginia, and advising pepper producers in Guam. He will be joined by entomologist and pest management ex-

pert Dr. Aubrey Moore and Rynette Perez, a community nutrition specialist, both with the University of Guam extension service.

Participants will learn:

- Types of peppers in Guam and the top recommended varieties

- Growing peppers with drip irrigation

- How to propagate, plant, cultivate, and fertilize peppers

- Products that can be made from local peppers

- Environmentally friendly methods of pest management for pepper plants

Space is limited to 25 participants. To register, email Kaya Taitano at taitanok14646@triton.uog.edu. (UOG)

Calvary Baptist Church eyes 55K Bible distribution



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Calvary Baptist Church pastor Matthew Furan hands a copy of the Bible to Tinian Mayor Edwin Aldan during a recent donation of 1,800 Bibles to the island.

By MARK RABAGO

mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Calvary Baptist Church has 55,000 Bibles on hand and is looking to distribute them all over the CNMI.

Its latest distribution effort was held on Tinian where pastor Matthew Furan and his congregation delivered 1,800 Bibles to the island population.

"[We want] everyone in the CNMI to have their own copy of God's Word. The Bible tells us that 'The entrance of thy word giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple,'" he said.

The Bibles being donated by the church are custom-designed for the CNMI, with the cover honoring the CNMI heritage with the flag, the plumeria, and a picture of Saipan and Tinian (and soon Rota).

The reception of the community to the Bible distribution so far has been amazing, according to Furan.

"There have only been a few that have rejected it. We expected that and that is OK. Oftentimes, people will ask us for more so that they can give to their family members. The New Testament we give has chapters of study that helps to assist people to understand the Bible and its basic teachings. These Bibles are offered as gifts and are never sold," he added.

For the distribution of Bibles on Tinian, Calvary Baptist Church met with Tinian

Mayor Edwin Aldan and presented him with his own copy of the Bible.

"There is also a copy that he has placed in the historical records of Tinian. The mayor invited us back to his staff barbecue and we had the chance to present a Bible to each of his staff and family," said Furan.

Next up is Rota, as Calvary Baptist Church will soon contact Rota Mayor Aubry Hocog to schedule a meeting and present her and her staff copies of the Bible.

"We have been actively giving out Bibles from house to house and apartment to apartment. It will take time to distribute the 55,000 Bibles that we brought here. Eventually, the whole of the CNMI (that wants one) will have their own. We have plans in place to make it to Rota to do the same," said Furan.

Calvary Baptist Church so far has also given away Bibles to the Veterans Affairs Office on Saipan, the U.S. Marine Corp. recruiting office with military Bibles for recruits, and the CNMI Office of Corrections for the inmates and officers.

If anyone would like a copy for themselves and their family they are welcome to call Calvary Baptist Church and Furan at 785-8641 or email the church at cbcsaipan@gmail.com. They can also meet people at the church building in Oleai (located across from Marianas Health, LLC).

Joint diplomacy enables emergency veterinary care for drug detection dog; medical evac from Palau to Guam



JRM

K9 Keiko and her care team pose for a photo with Joint Region Marianas commander Rear Adm. Benjamin Nicholson during a medical call at the Boller Veterinary Clinic on U.S. Naval Base Guam. Keiko, a Palauan drug detection dog, is receiving advanced veterinary care from members of U.S. Army Medical Readiness Command Pacific.

By RACHEL LANDERS

JRM Public Affairs Office

ASAN, Guam—Unaware of the international diplomacy and inter-agency coordination involved in her care, K9 Keiko, a Palauan drug detection dog, is seen soaking up sunshine and head scratches from her handlers at the U.S. Naval Base Guam veterinary clinic on Thursday.

Keiko is a 5-year-old Belgian Malinois dog with the Palau Narcotics Enforcement Agency and Bureau of Customs and Border Protection. She is one of eight working dogs provided by the United States to the Republic of Palau under the Building Partner Capacity Program. The program, organized under 10 USC Section 333, provides a K9 unit, local handler training, and military-grade dog kenneling facilities to bolster drug detection and border security for the island nation. Keiko had been working on Palau since 2021, but this March a medical condition required advanced veterinary care that was unavailable on the island.

Palau's national security coordinator reached out to the

U.S. Embassy in Palau and Joint Region Marianas requesting advanced veterinary capabilities. As the closest U.S. Military Command, JRM was responsible for coordinating the medical evacuation. Harry Elliott, JRM regional environmental and international law counsel, explained the complex international effort to clear the K9's transfer to the U.S. military veterinarian facilities. The process involved letters, phone calls, and extensive coordination of personnel across multiple branches of the military. "Our ability to coordinate a request like this demonstrates how strong the bonds between these nations are," Elliott said.

Thanks to the strong coordination among the Department of State, JRM, the U.S. Coast Guard 14th District and U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia, Keiko was able to be air evacuated in an HC-130 Hercules fixed-wing plane from U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Barbers Point, Hawaii, within a week of Palau's request for aid.

Upon arrival in Guam, Keiko was checked in to the

veterinary clinic on U.S. Naval Base Guam for diagnostic. Three veterinarians and six veterinary technicians from U.S. Army Medical Readiness Command Pacific delivered round-the-clock care.

The U.S. Naval Hospital Guam shared their CT scanner and medical expertise with veterinarians and the NBG Apra Harbor Clinic physical therapy department has offered after-hours access to the care team in order for Keiko to use the rehabilitation facilities. With the support of so many behind her, Keiko seems to be regaining her health.

"We have seen a marked improvement in her condition," says Col. Stephen Cassle, the MRC Pacific commander overseeing Keiko's medical care. "She got her appetite back and is already much more alert and engaged. We are starting to see that Belgian Malinois energy again, which is a good sign."

The region's senior military official, JRM Commander Rear Adm. Benjamin Nicholson, stopped by for a morale visit at the vet clinic as soon as Keiko was healthy enough.

Despite medical dressings and the haze of antibiotics, Keiko greeted her visitor with a sniff. A blue and yellow medical wrap designed to resemble the Palau flag could be seen on the dog's front paw as Nicholson took a knee to greet the four-legged patient.

"I'm so sorry you're not feeling good. But all of us are here to make sure you feel better again soon, ok? We are going to make sure you feel like yourself again, whatever it takes," Nicholson said, offering Keiko some reassuring pets. Nicholson went on to discuss her prognosis with her care team and thank them for their commitment to the dog's care.

"Thank you for all your expertise, I'm happy to see her perking up. This was really a massive joint effort—I mean every branch of the military was here for her from the Coast Guard to the Army to the Navy. Our working dog program is an essential part of our relationship with Palau, and I want to thank you all for being a part of that," Nicholson told the veterinary care team.

Opinion

Hafa Adail

Saipan Tribune

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Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950**Jayvee L. Vallejera** EDITOR
editor@saipantribune.com**Mark Rabago** ASSOCIATE EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Put Trump's trial on TV: Every American should be able see the full proceedings of the criminal case in Manhattan court

As the Trump grand jury was in secret, the trial must be in public, but in New York State, basically unique in the country, the public is unable to watch trials unless they are lucky enough to snag a courtroom seat. That should change—for all trials—before the prosecution of Donald J. Trump.

But even if the law isn't amended, Trump and DA Alvin Bragg should jointly ask the judge to permit cameras for everything.

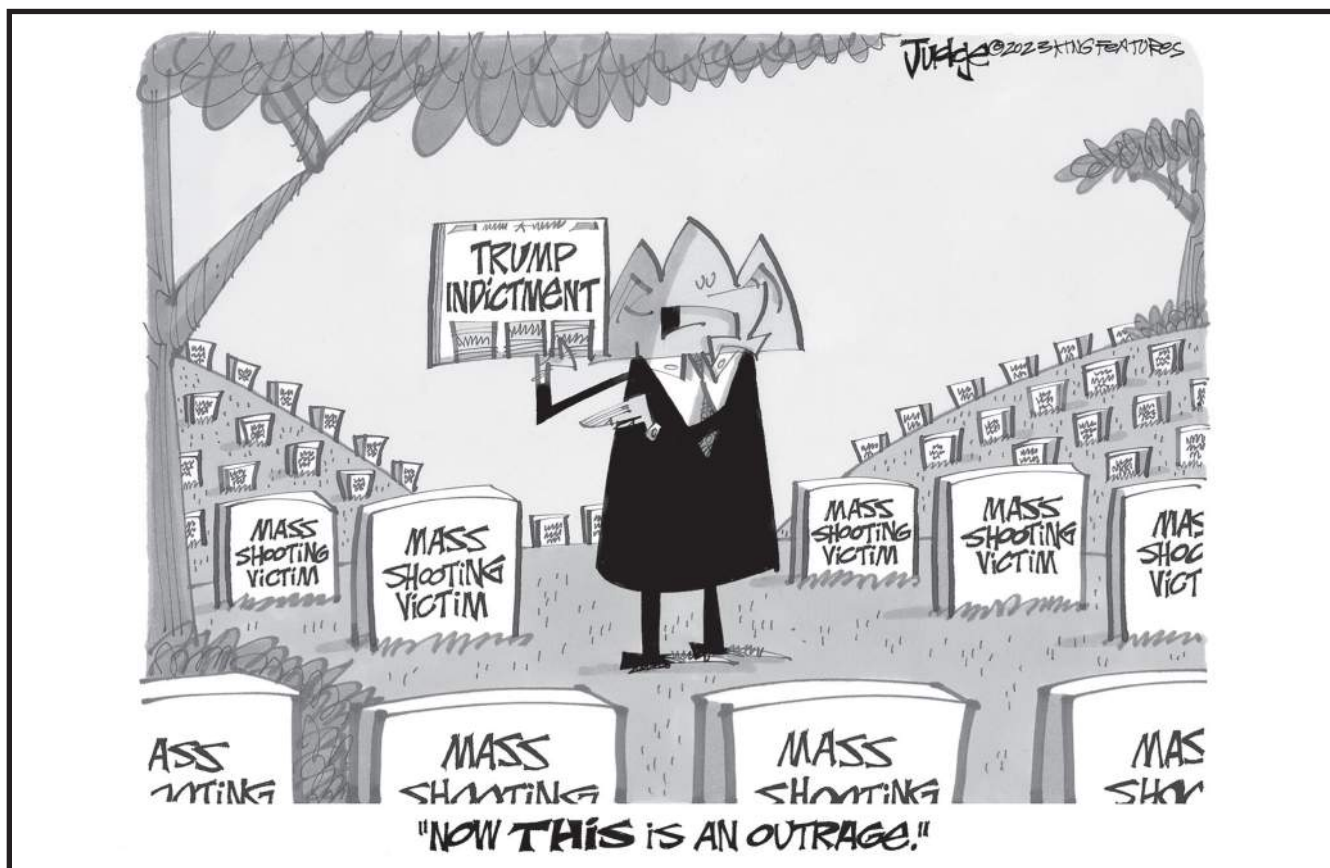
Long ago, New York feared that cameras would encourage grandstanding and banned them. Over time, as state after state has embraced transparency, it's clear that the benefits, letting people see how cases are presented and proved or not, far outweigh the risks.

A coming trial, with unprecedented public interest, will be an O.J.-sized spectacle in which every interaction is run through the cable TV and Twitter hysteria mills. Cameras in court can be an antidote to such breathlessness. Both Trump boosters and Trump haters would see what actually unfolds: the banalities on which the case is built, how witnesses are examined and cross-examined, how holes are poked in the prosecution. As they do, they are less likely to embrace outlandish conspiracies and likelier to root their reactions in reality. This would be a public education as important as putting Senate hearings on C-SPAN.

From 1987 to 1997, New York State piloted cameras in the courtroom. That experiment was a great success, but it lapsed. Since then, the criminal defense bar, which fears that TV will bias proceedings against the accused, has used its clout in Albany to keep video out of court despite every chief judge for decades wanting cameras. Every year there's a bill to allow cameras and every year it is defeated. There's a bill this year and it should pass, in time for Trump's trial.

Currently, cameras are only allowed for non-witness testimony portions, like opening and closing arguments, but 330 million Americans need to see all of it. Trump and Bragg should ask the judge to bring in cameras.

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Ukraine is counting on its spring offensive against Russia. Biden has a stake in it too

After a winter of punishing but indecisive battles, Ukraine is preparing a long-promised spring offensive that officials hope will change the course of the war against Russia.

The goal is to break Russia's hold on southern and eastern Ukraine and convince Russian President Vladimir Putin that his war has become a losing proposition.

U.S. officials say that if Ukraine succeeds, Putin could eventually agree to peace talks on terms acceptable to Ukraine. But if Ukraine fails, the conflict is likely to devolve into a long war of attrition—and Putin has declared that in that scenario, time is on Russia's side.

The war also has a Western front in the domestic politics of the United States and its European allies, which have given Ukraine the military and economic aid it needs to survive.

If Ukraine succeeds, its Western supporters will feel vindicated. If it falls short, political support in the West will erode.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy isn't the only leader racing against a clock; President Joe Biden is too.

From a military standpoint, "the longer you wait to [launch the offensive], the harder it will be," Michael Kofman, an expert on the Russian military at the Center for Naval Analyses, said last month. "The more time is spent, the more Russian units will be able to entrench."

From a political standpoint, time is not on Biden's side either. Public opinion in the United States and Europe has broadly backed Ukraine, but support has weakened as the war has become longer and more expensive.

Biden has frequently promised that the United States will support Ukraine for "as long as it takes" to defeat Russia. But that's a promise he may not be able to keep—and not if he loses his expected reelection bid next year.

Experts say Ukraine's military offensive may still be weeks away. Much of the country is mired in spring thaw, which turns fields and rural roads into a sea of mud—tough terrain even for armored vehicles.

Bolstered by new tanks and armored troop carriers supplied by the West, Ukraine will try to dislodge Russian forces from the southern and eastern parts of the country.

One likely target will be the Russian-occupied southeastern coast, a land bridge that connects Russia to the Crimean Peninsula, which Putin seized from Ukraine in 2014. Severing the bridge "would have a dramatic impact on Russian morale and motivation," said Douglas Lute, a retired Army lieutenant general who served as U.S. ambassador to NATO.

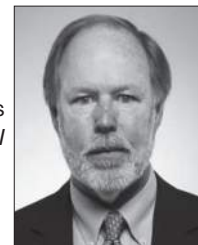
Some of the Western equipment Ukraine is counting on is arriving only now: heavy tanks from Germany and Britain, along with armored combat vehicles from the U.S. and half a dozen other countries.

The U.S. and the European Union are sending thousands

By DOYLE MCMANUS

Los Angeles Times

Doyle McManus is a columnist for the Los Angeles Times. Readers may send him email at doyle.mcmanus@latimes.com.



of rounds of artillery ammunition from newly mobilized munitions plants. And the U.S. is providing a new ground-to-ground missile, the awkwardly named Ground Launched Small Diameter Bomb, with a range of about 90 miles—longer than the missiles Ukraine has now but still only half the reach of another the country has requested.

That's not enough, critics complain.

"We're providing the systems they needed six months ago," Lute said. "War is not a mathematical equation. You need to overprovide."

"Now is the time to give Ukraine what they need in order to avoid the political calendar next year," he added.

In fact, the U.S. political calendar has already begun.

Former President Donald Trump has complained that American taxpayers are giving Ukraine too much aid and suggested that he would end the war in 24 hours by allowing Putin "to take over something."

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis chimed in, saying it was not in our interest to become "further entangled in a territorial dispute between Ukraine and Russia."

A poll sponsored by the Associated Press found that the share of Americans who support military aid to Ukraine dropped to 48% in February from 60% last May. Responses reflected a partisan divide, with Republicans increasingly opposed to Biden's policy.

The outcome of the spring offensive is likely to further affect public opinion.

"If this becomes a grinding war with no end in sight, it becomes a lot harder to maintain Western support," noted Steven Pifer, a former U.S. ambassador to Ukraine.

Putin's calculation is that he can outlast both Ukraine and the West—that the longer the war continues, the more Ukraine will suffer, and the more fatigued Western voters will be.

That's why it's vital that the U.S. and its allies give Ukraine as much help as they can now, when it's most useful.

Yes, the war has been costly—far more for Ukrainians, who have lost lives and homes, than for American taxpayers.

But the best chance of bringing it to an early end—and avoiding a long and more punishing stalemate—is to make sure Ukraine has what it needs to convince Putin he cannot win.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Kids deserve to know the truth about America's racist past. Even if it's painful

Last month, school officials in St. Petersburg, Florida, told teachers to stop showing students a Disney movie about Ruby Bridges, the 6-year-old Black girl who integrated an all-white New Orleans elementary school in the 1960s.

A white parent had complained that the movie was not appropriate for second-graders, as the scenes showing people threatening Ruby and calling her names might teach students that white people hate Black people.

Oh, my gosh, you might find yourself asking, could some white people hate Black people?

Did white people ever fight to keep Black children away from their schools, their neighborhoods, their stores, their buses, their drinking fountains?

It's just really hard to imagine the legacy of racial hatred, I guess, if you are a white Florida parent in the grip of fear about "critical race theory" and "woke ideology."

After all, you live in a state where the Republican governor has settled on a strategy of exploiting white angst for political gain as he blusters his way toward a presidential candidacy. (Gov. Ron DeSantis's go-to line: "Florida is where 'woke' goes to die.")

In that charged political environment, it only makes sense that a white parent mistakenly believes that a movie about racism is designed to make your white child feel bad. And we can't have that.

For Black people, though, the truth is that some very bad things are baked into American politics, justice, education, housing, job markets. Racism doesn't affect just wealth, though. It plays a big role in health, as well.

For reasons having nothing to do with genetics, life expectancy is shorter for Black Americans than for white Americans. A 2020 study, for instance, found that "discrimination is a chronic stressor that may increase the risk of hypertension."

In this country, the high rate of Black maternal mortality is a national shame.

Fortunately, a growing number of Americans seems to understand the relationship between poor outcomes for Black Americans and the legacies of slavery, oppression and systemic racism.

They also grasp that over the decades—centuries, really—racist policies made it possible for some people (i.e. white Americans) to flourish, while impeding progress for others (i.e. Black Americans, indigenous Americans and other people of color).

Those willing to face the past with an open mind understand there is a systemic reason, unrelated to any individual's behavior,

why the median wealth of white households is nearly 10 times greater than the wealth of Black households.

Most Americans oppose the idea of cash reparations as a way of atoning for the ills of slavery and the many ways its noxious repercussions inform the present. But the concept of reparations is hardly revolutionary or new. And reparations can take many non-monetary forms, starting with the unfulfilled post-Civil War promise of "40 acres and a mule."

In 1988, for instance, President Ronald Reagan apologized for the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II and authorized a payment of \$20,000 to each living former detainee.

And there are reparations efforts large and small taking place all over the country today.

In 2021, Evanston, Illinois, created a slavery reparations plan for its Black residents. In 2022, Harvard University allocated \$100 million to study the ways the university benefited from slavery and develop a process for "reckoning and repair."

Last month, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors heard a report from its reparations task force that recommended, among other things, payments of \$5 million to every eligible Black adult, the elimination of personal debt and guaranteed annual incomes of at least \$97,000 for 250 years.

Last week, the California task force appointed to study reparations for descendants of enslaved people met for two days of public hearings. Economists advising the task force have estimated that Black Californians may be owed more than \$800 billion for decades of housing discrimination, overpolicing and disproportionate incarceration.

Maybe these eye-popping dollar figures will never be fully paid, but what reparations discussions do, and do so well, is raise our consciousness about the real costs of slavery and institutional racism.

It's a discussion that's been going for years. In 2014, Ta-Nehisi Coates' landmark piece in the Atlantic, "The Case for Reparations," reignited a national discussion with its granular statistics about the ways in which Black Americans have been shut out of the fabled American Dream.

(When I looked up the piece Friday, I was stunned to see an appended editor's note: "On February 1, 2023, the College Board announced its finalized curriculum for an AP African American Studies course. It has removed work—present in the pilot program—by writers such as bell hooks, Kimberlé Crenshaw, and Ta-Nehisi Coates, the author of this article." Florida strikes again.)

By **ROBIN ABCARIAN**
Los Angeles Times



This week, I've been reading "How the Word Is Passed: A Reckoning With the History of Slavery Across America," a 2021 book by the poet and Atlantic staff writer Clint Smith.

Smith, a New Orleans native, visits nine places with strong links to slavery, exploring the ways in which the institution is memorialized, or distorted, or perpetuated to this day.

In a visit to Thomas Jefferson's plantation, Monticello, in Virginia, he mines the contradictions of the man who wrote "all men are created equal" and also enslaved his own children.

At Angola, the Louisiana prison built on the site of a plantation, he is thrown back in time watching Black inmates pick cotton under the gaze of horse-mounted guards.

He spends a Memorial Day in Petersburg, Virginia, with Sons of Confederate Veterans, one of whom shows him the grave of a Black man, Richard Poplar, who, the Confederate son claims, served as an officer in the Confederate Army. Smith's research reveals the man was most likely a cook.

It's the sort of book that should be taught in all American schools, but is caught in the crosshairs of one of the most ignorant battles of our time: the fight to squash the truth about slavery and racism.

Unlike the movie "Ruby Bridges," Smith's book hasn't been banned exactly. But it has been suppressed.

Last week, Smith told NPR's Terry Gross that a private school, which had selected "How the Word Is Passed" as a text for all students to read, canceled an order of 2,000 copies and disinvited Smith from speaking with its students.

His speaking agency was told, said Smith, that "they didn't want any sort of controversial critical race theory books being inserted into the lives of students and having them indoctrinated with a particular set of views."

Of course not. We don't want to give children an uncomfortably true impression about our country's horrific past.

What makes this economic slowdown different from the others?

We've been watching slumps ripple through various parts of the economy over the past 18 months: technology startups and stocks, regional banks and growing concern about commercial real estate. Yet we're still waiting for the wider labor market to feel the downturn.

Does it even have to? Prior bubbles or periods of economic excess have featured too much hiring and investing like we saw during the late 1990s boom. Or we've had excessive credit creation and construction, as we confronted during the mid-2000s. The downturns that followed those periods involved unwinding some of that activity, which led to declines in employment and investment.

But the excess we had in 2020 and 2021 at the national level wasn't about too much hiring or investing—it was mainly about the mistaken belief that interest rates would remain low. That's the excess now being unwound. And while it's painful for those making the adjustment, it doesn't need to lead to the kinds of job losses we've had in the past.

Think about what happened in the technology sector, which has experienced some of the most high-profile job losses over the past year. One big reason for the cuts was that some companies over-hired during the pandemic based on business trends that turned out to be unsustainable. A second reason is that rising interest rates have shifted investor priorities to expanding profit instead of just revenue, which has forced unprofitable tech companies to curtail their spending.

The website layoffs.fyi, which tracks layoff announcements in the tech sector, has recorded 317,000 job cuts from

January 2022 through March 2023. Compare that with the 4.3 million jobs the US economy has added over the past year. The layoffs appear to have peaked in January, suggesting most of the rightsizing is behind us. So we made it through a tech employment correction with unemployment remaining low and the national labor market still strong.

The bank crisis of the past month had nothing to do with bad loans or excess credit creation. During the pandemic, banks like Silicon Valley Bank took in a ton of deposits and used them to buy Treasury bonds. Those Treasuries fell in value as rates rose in the past year, resulting in losses for SVB. Depositors rushed to claim their money, SVB was overwhelmed and regulators stepped in. The crisis called attention to similar weakness in other banks, leading to broader concerns about the stability of the system.

And now those problems have put a spotlight on the commercial real estate sector. It was already struggling because of falling property values, but now it faces the added risk that banks will tighten credit to commercial borrowers. The office market's problems are unique, but for commercial real estate more broadly the issue is that many properties were financed at very low interest rates, and because funding costs were so low they were bought at elevated valuations. Then as interest rates rose, valuations declined. That means any loans coming due will have to be refinanced at higher interest rates, which may not be workable relative to the cash flow produced by the assets.

But it's not like the commercial real estate business has been propping up the US economy. Investment in nonresidential

By **CONOR SEN**
Bloomberg Opinion

Conor Sen is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist. He is founder of Peachtree Creek Investments.



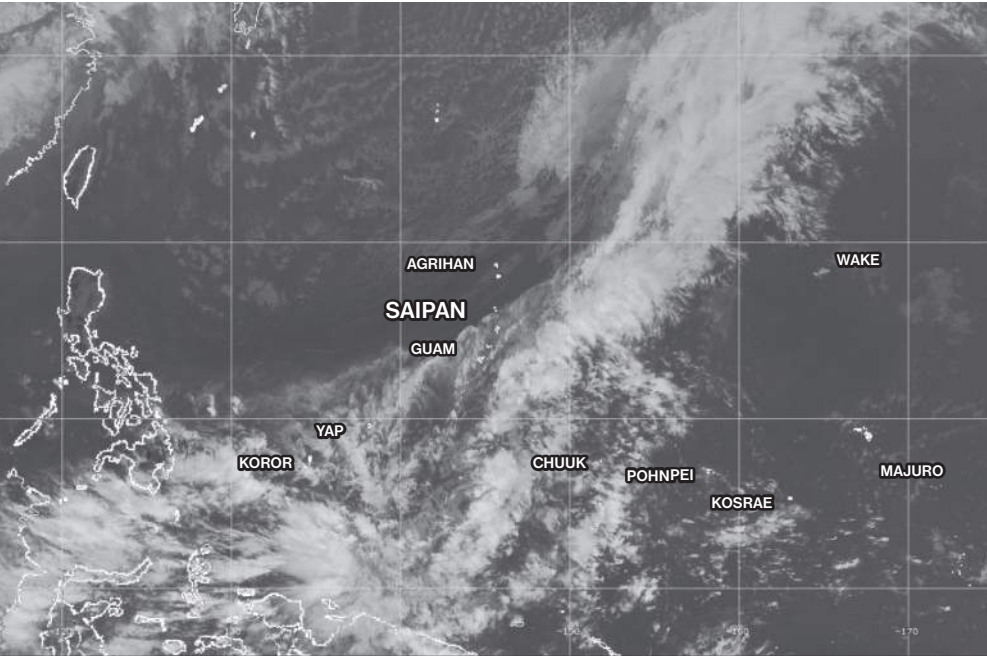
structures as a percentage of GDP is at its lowest level in 20 years, down 40% from where it was in 2007.

And the kinds of buildings most in distress—such as older office buildings—generate very little economic activity. It can even be argued that when some of them default, go dark and get redeveloped, it will have a positive impact on economic growth because new construction is so much more resource-intensive than the day-to-day operations of a 40-year-old office building.

The unusual thing about this downturn is that the excess being unwound reflects more than a decade of low interest rates, an era that cemented the belief that fast growth and high inflation were relics of the past. If the late 1990s boom was defined by the phrase "irrational exuberance," then the low-interest-rate era has been emblematic of irrational pessimism. You generally don't get too much hiring and investment across the whole economy when people are pessimistic about the future. And that's why we aren't likely to see the sort of downturn—including a collapse in the labor market—that we've had after cycles of excess in the past.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY		SUNDAY	
Isolated showers. Mostly sunny		Isolated showers. Mostly sunny		A 30 percent chance of showers. Partly sunny		A chance of showers. Partly sunny		A chance of showers. Partly sunny	
84°	75°	85°	75°	85°	78°	85°	78°	85°	78°
YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									



PICTURE TIME: 7:59 AM, TUESDAY, APRIL 4, 2023
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Satellite and radar imagery showed scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms to the east of the local area this morning.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA			▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	86° / 75°	
Palau	Partly Cloudy	87° / 78°	
Yap	Partly Cloudy	86° / 79°	
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	85° / 80°	
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	86° / 78°	
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	86° / 78°	
Majuro	Scattered Thunderstorms	85° / 80°	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:10 AM	6:29 PM
Thursday	6:09 AM	6:29 PM
Friday	6:08 AM	6:30 PM
Saturday	6:08 AM	6:30 PM
Sunday	6:07 AM	6:30 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	5:29 AM	5:46 PM
Thursday	-	6:03 AM	6:35 PM
Friday	-	6:40 AM	7:27 PM
Saturday	-	7:19 AM	8:21 PM
Sunday	-	8:01 AM	9:18 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Showers	61° / 53°	
Beijing	Cloudy	64° / 45°	
Hong Kong	Showers	77° / 74°	
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	84° / 72°	
London	Partly Cloudy	72° / 57°	
Los Angeles	Sunny	83° / 62°	
Manila	Thunderstorms	89° / 79°	
Melbourne	Light Rain	58° / 46°	
Miami	Cloudy	86° / 78°	
New York	Cloudy	72° / 63°	
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	88° / 78°	
Paris	Showers	75° / 63°	
Busan	Thunderstorms/Wind	76° / 72°	
Rome	Showers	52° / 38°	
Salem	Fog	83° / 64°	
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	71° / 51°	
Seoul	Showers	79° / 69°	
Tokyo	Cloudy	88° / 77°	
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	79° / 62°	

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
1:13 AM	Low Tide	0.35	
7:27 AM	High Tide	1.81	
1:40 PM	Low Tide	0.56	
7:29 PM	High Tide	1.79	

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily	UA174	8:00AM	8:45AM	Daily
SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
UA824	7:25AM	9:55AM	1, 3, 5	UA825	9:25PM	1:50AM+1	2, 4, 7
GUAM-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-GUAM			
PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	Daily	UA184	10:25PM	4:15AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA193	6:55PM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Palau	UA189	10:25PM	6:10AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	7:15PM	9:10PM	Daily	PR110	10:30PM	4:25AM+1	Daily
				UA192	11:50PM	5:35AM+1	2, 5
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
UA117/183	9:50AM	9:10PM	Daily via Guam	UA184/174	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau	UA192/174	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
				UA184/174	11:50PM	8:45AM+1	2, 5 via Guam
SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)				INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308	3:15AM	7:00AM	1, 4, 5, 7	7C3406	9:30AM	3:10PM	Daily
TW9308	3:45AM	7:30AM	4, 7	TW307	8:30PM	2:15AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7
7C3405	4:10PM	7:45PM	Daily	TW9307	9:00PM	2:45AM+1	3, 6

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.			
FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022			
SAIPAN TO ROTA			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30	9:00	Daily
1302	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1302	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/ Sat/Sun
1303	15:30	16:00	Daily
ROTA TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/ Sat/Sun
3102	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
3103	16:30	17:00	Daily
ROTA TO GUAM			
LIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
SAIPAN TO TINIAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily
GUAM TO ROTA			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
TINIAN TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily

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Business

JTM Snack Bar echoes an old favorite



MARK RABAGO

By **MARK RABAGO**
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

JTM Snack Bar & BBQ Grill & Catering Services is located behind R&J Wine, Liquor & Tobacco along Beach Road in Garapan.

JTM Saipan is reviving the menu of an old favorite after opening JTM Snack Bar & BBQ Grill & Catering Services last Thursday.

Staff Rosalinda Guevarra said they opened the snack bar due to insistent public demand, as loyal customers of JHEMS Restaurant have been asking her to reopen the food establishment that pioneered binalot meals on Saipan.

Binalot, according to the internet, is a method of wrapping and serving food in the Philippines using banana leaves and alike. JHEMS Restaurant, meanwhile, was owned by Guevarra's sister Beth Miyata and its trademark binalot meals included fried eggplant, bagoong alamang (shrimp paste), tomatoes, and salted egg as side dishes.

Guevarra, whose husband also used to work for JHEMS Restaurant and is now the main cook of JTM Snack Bar, said they also opened a new restaurant to help unemployed workers find jobs as they also run a manpower agency.

During their opening last week, JTM Snack Bar was flooded with orders from the old JHEMS Restaurant menu like bulalo, crispy pata, and pork barbecue.

Aside from these tried-and-tested bestsellers, JTM Snack Bar also serves party staples like pancit (canton, bihon, and



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

JTM Snack Bar & BBQ Grill & Catering Services' pork barbecue are cooked fresh off the grill.

malabon), beef and pork caldereta, beef and pork steak, spicy pork spareribs, fried chicken, chopsuey, menudo, kare-kare, dinuguan, lumpiang shanghai, fresh spring rolls, among others. They're all available in trays and half trays. Also coming soon are chicken litson and liempo to compliment their pork and chicken barbecue and isaw offerings.

Like your typical eateries on island, JTM Snack Bar also offers two- and three-choice meals for \$4.99 and \$7.75, respectively, for office workers who don't have time to cook.

Future plans include offering boodle fight (communal eating



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

JTM Snack Bar & BBQ Grill & Catering Services' sampler tray of crispy pata, pork barbecue, fried chicken, and isaw.

using your fingers) not only in their catering services but also hopefully in their dine-in restaurant, which Guevarra hopes will open before the year ends.

"We don't have dine-in yet because we want to try this out (takeout, delivery, and catering) first before committing to a full-service restaurant operation," she said.

JTM Snack Bar also has a delivery service, where the cost is \$2 for Garapan area customers, \$3 for Gualo Rai and Oleai customers, and a pricier delivery charge for farther places.

To mark their opening, JTM Snack Bar gave away \$50 worth of set meals for the Top

3 sharers and likers of their posts on Facebook. They're also unveiling a loyalty card soon where a \$10 purchase gets you a stamp and 10 stamps will get you a free set meal worth around \$15.

For catering, Guevarra said orders should be made three days in advance. They also update their daily food menu everyday on Facebook.

JTM Snack Bar & BBQ Grill & Catering Services is open from 11am to 9pm everyday. It's located behind R&J Wine, Liquor & Tobacco along Beach Road in Garapan. For more information, call (670) 785-0716 or email jtm.bbqandsnackbar@gmail.com.

ADB forecasts China, India to power strong growth in '23

BANGKOK (AP)—China's recovery from the pandemic and strong demand in India will drive strong economic growth in Asia this year, the Asian Development Bank said in a report issued Tuesday.

The Manila, Philippines-based ADB's latest update forecasts an expansion of 4.8% in this year and the next, up from 4.2% in 2022. It said inflation would likely cool slightly this year and fall further in 2024.

ADB economists said a weekend decision by oil producing nations to cut output, pushing oil prices sharply higher, might reignite inflationary pressures and add to challenges for the region.

The report's analysis was based on the assumption that Brent crude oil, the pricing basis for international trading, would average \$88 a barrel this year and \$90 a barrel next year.

Oil prices remain below that level, with Brent at \$83 on Monday. But they soared about 5% after Saudi Arabia and other major oil producers said they will cut production by 1.15 million barrels per day from May until the end of the year, on top of a reduction announced last October that infuriated the Biden administration.

"It's certainly plausible that oil prices could go even higher and introduce another challenge for the region," ADB Chief Economist Albert Park said in a conference call.

However, growing imports of Russian crude oil, especially by China and India, will likely cushion the impact of rising prices — such exports to China, India and Turkey more than doubled last year. As of February, a third of Russia's crude exports were going to India and more than a fifth to China.

Park noted that inflation in Asia seems to be driven more by surging demand for services, such as tourism, than

for goods.

Another factor that could push prices higher is China's rebound from slow growth after its leaders lifted COVID-19 restrictions that disrupted travel, manufacturing and other business activities. The ADB forecasts that China's economy will grow 5% this year and 4.5% next year, an improvement over last year's 3% growth but slower than its long-term average.

India's economy, meanwhile, is expected to grow at a slower pace of 6.4% this year. That follows a 9.1% annual pace of expansion in 2021 as it rebounded from the worst of the pandemic, and 6.8% last year. But it's one of the fastest expansions for a major regional economy.

Vietnam, meanwhile, is expected to see 6.5% growth this year, down from 8% last year. That's above the average forecast for Southeast Asia, at 4.7% in 2023 and 5% next year.

A downturn in demand for computer chips has hurt the outlook for major exporters like Taiwan, Singapore and South Korea, said the report by the regional development lender.

It cited a forecast by World Semiconductor Trade Statistics that sales in semiconductors will fall 4.1% this year from last year but said demand is likely to recover later this year, as is typical in the highly cyclical industry.

Recent worries over the stability of the banking industry after bank failures in the U.S. and Switzerland's rescue of Credit Suisse with a partial takeover by its rival UBS are among other uncertainties facing the global and regional economy, the report noted. The war in Ukraine also might push prices for commodities such as oil, gas and wheat higher, further bedeviling central bank efforts to curb inflation.

Nation

Trump to surrender to history-making criminal charges

NEW YORK (AP)—An extraordinary moment in U.S. history is scheduled to unfold in a Manhattan courthouse Tuesday: Former President Donald Trump, who faces multiple election-related investigations, will surrender to face criminal charges stemming from 2016 hush money payments.

The booking and arraignment are likely to be relatively brief—though hardly routine—as Trump is fingerprinted, learns the exact charges against him and pleads, as expected, not guilty.

Trump, who was impeached twice by the U.S. House but was never convicted in the U.S. Senate, will become the first former president to face criminal charges. The nation's 45th commander in chief will be escorted from Trump Tower to the courthouse by the Secret Service and may have his mug shot taken.

New York police are braced for protests by Trump supporters, who share the former president's belief that the New York grand jury indictment—and three additional pending investigations—are politically motivated and intended to weaken his bid to retake the White House in 2024.

Trump, a former reality-TV star, has been hyping that



Former president Donald Trump arrives at Trump Tower in New York on Monday, April 3, 2023.

narrative to his political advantage, raising millions of dollars since the indictment on claims of a “witch hunt.” He has personally assailed the Manhattan district attorney, egged on supporters to protest, and claimed without evidence that the judge presiding over the case “hates me”—something Trump's own lawyer has said is not true.

Trump is scheduled to return to his Florida home, Mar-a-Lago, Tuesday evening to hold a rally, punctuating his new reality: submitting to the dour demands of the American

criminal justice system while projecting an aura of defiance and victimhood at celebratory campaign events.

A conviction would not prevent Trump from running for or winning the presidency in 2024.

Inside the Manhattan courtroom, prosecutors led by New York's district attorney, Alvin Bragg, are expected to unseal the indictment issued last week by a grand jury. This is when Trump and his defense lawyers will get their first glimpse of the precise allegations against him.

The indictment includes multiple charges of falsifying business records, including at least one felony offense, two people familiar with the matter told The Associated Press last week.

After the arraignment, Trump is expected to be released by authorities because the charges against him don't require that bail be set.

The investigation is scrutinizing six-figure payments made to porn actor Stormy Daniels and former Playboy model Karen McDougal. Both say they had sexual encounters with the married Trump years before he got into politics. Trump denies having sexual liaisons with either woman and has denied any wrongdoing involving payments.

The arraignment will unfold against the backdrop of heavy security in New York, coming more than two years after Trump supporters stormed the U.S. Capitol in a failed bid to halt the congressional certification of President Joe Biden's win.

Though police said they had no intelligence suggesting any violence was likely, they were on high alert for any potential disruptions.

“While there may be some rabble rousers thinking of coming to our city tomorrow, our message is clear and simple: Control yourselves,” Mayor Eric Adams said at a news conference Monday.

Trump pollster John McLaughlin said the former president would approach the day with “dignity.”

“He will be a gentleman,” McLaughlin said. “He'll show strength and he'll show dignity and ... we'll get through this and win the election.”

The public fascination with the case was evident Monday as national television carried live images of Trump's motorcade from his Mar-a-Lago club to his red, white and blue Boeing 757. From there, he was flown to New York, where he was expected to spend the night at Trump Tower before turning himself in the following day.

The former president and his aides are embracing the media circus. After initially being caught off guard when news of the indictment broke Thursday evening, Trump and his team are hoping to use the case to his advantage. Still, they asked the judge in a Monday filing to ban photo and video coverage of the arraignment.

Teacher shot by 6-year-old student files \$40M lawsuit

RICHMOND, Va. (AP)—A Virginia teacher who was shot and seriously wounded by her 6-year-old student filed a lawsuit Monday seeking \$40 million in damages from school officials, accusing them of gross negligence and of ignoring multiple warnings the day of the shooting that the boy was armed and in a “violent mood.”

Abby Zwerner, a first-grade teacher at Richneck Elementary School in Newport News, was shot in the hand and chest on Jan. 6 as she sat at a reading table in her classroom. The 25-year-old teacher spent nearly two weeks in the hospital and required four surgeries.

The shooting sent shock waves through the military shipbuilding community and the country, with many wondering how a child so young could access a gun and shoot his teacher.

The lawsuit names as defendants the Newport News School Board, former Superintendent George Parker III, former Richneck principal Briana Foster-Newton and former Richneck assistant principal Ebony Parker.

Michelle Price, a school board spokesperson, said via

email that the board had not yet been served with the lawsuit, adding the school division refers all legal claims information to its insurer.

“Our thoughts and prayers remain with Abby Zwerner and her ongoing recovery,” said a board statement, calling the safety and well-being of staff and students its utmost priority. “The School Board and the school division's leadership team will continue to do whatever it takes to ensure a safe and secure teaching and learning environment across all our schools.”

George Parker, the former superintendent, did not immediately return a cellphone message. A message left on a cellphone listing for Ebony Parker also was not returned.

Foster-Newton's attorney, Pamela Branch, has said she was unaware of reports that the boy had a gun at school on the day of the shooting.

“Mrs. Briana Foster-Newton will vigorously defend any charges brought against her as a part of the lawsuit filed by Ms. Zwerner and respond accordingly,” Branch said in a statement.

James Ellenson, an attorney for the boy's family, said

in a statement Monday afternoon that the “allegations in the complaint in reference to the child and his family should be taken with a large grain of salt.”

“We of course continue to pray for Ms. Zwerner's complete recovery,” Ellenson said. “In that there is still the potential for criminal charges, there is no further comment.”

No one has been charged. The local prosecutor said last month that the boy will not be charged, although an investigation is ongoing.

The superintendent was fired by the school board and the assistant principal resigned. A school district spokesperson has said Newton-Foster is still employed by the school district, but declined to say what position she holds. The board voted to install metal detectors in every school in the district and to purchase clear backpacks for all students.

In the lawsuit, Zwerner's attorneys say all of the defendants knew the boy “had a history of random violence” at school and at home, including an episode the year before when he “strangled and choked” his kindergarten teacher.

Nashville police: School shooter planned attack for months

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—As students across Nashville walked out of class on Monday to protest gun violence at the Tennessee Capitol following a school shooting last week, police said the person who killed six people, including three 9-year-old children, had been planning the massacre for months.

Police have not established a motive for the shootings at The Covenant School, a small Christian elementary school where the 28-year-old shooter was once a student, according to a Monday news release from the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department. Both Nashville police and FBI agents continue to review writings left behind by Audrey Hale, both in Hale's vehicle and home, police said.

“It is known that Hale considered the actions of other mass murderers,” police said.

The three children who were killed in the shooting were Evelyn Dieckhaus, Hallie Scruggs and William Kinney. The three adults were Katherine Koonce, 60, the head of the school, custodian Mike Hill, 61, and 61-year-old substitute teacher Cynthia Peak.

Hale fired 152 rounds during the attack before being killed by police. That included 126 rifle rounds and 26 nine-millimeter rounds, according to police.

Outside the state Capitol on Monday, thousands rallied in a call for gun reform, many of them students from Nashville-area schools who walked out of their classes en masse. Some other students sat outside the House speaker's office in the legislative building.

The crowd outside the Capitol echoed chants such as “thoughts and prayers are not enough” and sang along to songs like “All You Need is Love” — adding to it, “and action!” At one point, they sat for a moment of silence, raising posters above their heads that read, “Thoughts and prayers are useless to dead children,” “Book bags not body bags,” and “2nd graders over 2nd amendment.” Some students wore orange shooting-target stickers on their shirts.

Vivian Carlson, a senior at Hume-Fogg High School nearby in downtown Nashville, helped organize her school's walkout. She told the crowd that her biggest fear last week, when the shooting unfolded, should have been “missing the bus or my stepmom scolding me for not cleaning the cat litter box.” Instead, she said she was missing English class Monday because politicians are “protecting old laws for a new society.”

Carlson, like many others who addressed the crowd, called for changes to Tennessee's gun laws, including a ban on assault weapons, tougher background checks and a “red flag” law. Red flag laws generally allow law enforcement to temporarily confiscate weapons from people whose statements or behavior are deemed to make them a danger to themselves or others.

“To my fellow students, we cannot let this pressure and fire escape us,” Carlson said. “Feel the fear as you walk into school and let it inspire you to fight for change. And please, if there is one thing you can do, I beg you to vote.”

Tennessee's Republican governor and supermajority Republican legislature have moved to loosen gun laws in recent years. The same day as the Covenant shooting a federal judge quietly cleared the way to drop the minimum age for Tennesseans to carry handguns publicly without a permit to 18—just two years after a new law set the age at 21.

As thousands swarmed the Capitol, Gov. Bill Lee and state lawmakers held a press conference nearby to unveil legislative proposals that would add more funding for school resource officers and mental health resources.

Asia

PH names 4 new camps for US forces amid China fury

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The Philippine government on Monday identified four new military camps, including some across the sea from Taiwan, where rotating batches of American forces will be allowed to be stationed indefinitely despite strong objections from China.

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s administration announced in February his approval of an expansion of the U.S. military presence to four additional Philippine military bases from the five existing sites under the 2014 Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement between the longtime treaty allies.

Marcos said the move would boost the Philippines' coastal defense. It dovetails with the Biden administration's efforts to strengthen an arc of military alliances in the Indo-Pacific to better counter China, including in any future confrontation over Taiwan.

The new sites identified by Marcos' office include a Philippine navy base in Santa Ana and an international airport in Lal-lo, both in northern Cagayan province. Those locations have infuriated Chinese officials because they would provide U.S. forces with a staging ground close to southern China and Taiwan, the self-governed island Beijing claims as its own.

The two other military areas are in northern Isabela province and a navy camp on Balabac island in the western province of Palawan.

Palawan faces the South China Sea, a key passage for

global trade that Beijing claims virtually in its entirety and has taken increasingly aggressive actions that have threatened smaller claimant states, including the Philippines.

China and the Philippines, along with Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan, have been locked in increasingly tense territorial disputes over the busy and resource-rich South China Sea. Washington lays no claims to the strategic waters but has deployed warships and fighter and surveillance aircraft for patrols that it says promote freedom of navigation and the rule of law, angering Beijing.

"That's a trade route, that's where more or less \$3 trillion worth of trade passes. Our responsibility in collectively securing that is huge," said Carlito Galvez, who heads the Philippine Defense Department.

The four new military sites for American forces are "suitable and mutually beneficial" and will "boost the disaster response of the country" as a springboard for humanitarian and relief work during emergencies, Marcos's office said.

In a statement, the U.S. Department of Defense said the new locations "will strengthen the interoperability of the U.S. and Philippine Armed Forces and allow us to respond more seamlessly together to address a range of shared challenges in the Indo-Pacific region."

In a meeting last month with Philippine officials in Manila, however, a Chinese Foreign Ministry delegation expressed its strong opposition to an ex-

panded U.S. military presence in the Philippines and warned of repercussions for regional peace and stability, a Philippine official involved in the talks said at the time.

Philippine diplomats replied that the decision to allow an expanded American military presence was in the Philippines' national interest and would boost its ability to respond to natural disasters, the official said, suggesting the move was not aimed at China.

The official spoke on condition of anonymity because of a lack of authority to publicly discuss the sensitive issue.

The Chinese Embassy also warned in a recent statement that the Philippine government's security cooperation with Washington "will drag the Philippines into the abyss of geopolitical strife and damage its economic development at the end of the day."

The long-seething territorial conflicts continue to be a major irritant in Philippine-China relations. Marcos's administration has filed at least 77 of more than 200 diplomatic protests against China's increasingly assertive actions in the disputed waters since he took office last year.

The Philippines used to host two of the largest U.S. Navy and Air Force bases outside the American mainland. The bases were shut down in the early 1990s after the Philippine Senate rejected an extension, but American forces later returned for large-scale combat exercises with Filipino troops under a Visiting Forces Agreement.

able" during a visit by Tsai. The two Central American nations represent two of Taiwan's 13 formal allies across the world, a number that has dipped as China has put pressure on and funneled money into isolating the island. The trip came just a week after Honduras announced it would cut allegiances with Taiwan in favor of China, potentially prompted by a \$300 million hydroelectric dam project in central Honduras built by a Chinese company.

Pakistani charity boss slams govt for Ramadan stampedes

ISLAMABAD (AP)—The head of Pakistan's largest charity slammed the government on Sunday after at least 23 people died during

stampedes to get free food during the holy month of Ramadan. Cash-strapped Pakistan launched an initiative to distribute free flour among low-income families to ease the impact of record-breaking inflation and soaring poverty during the holy month. Business owners often hand out cash and food in Ramadan, especially to the poor. But mismanagement and overcrowding have caused stampedes, with at least 23 people dying across the country. Faisal Edhi, head of the charity Edhi Foundation, called the deaths "unhumanitarian" because of the methods adopted by the government which he likened to "publicity stunts." "This is not the government way to distribute flour on roads," he told The Associated Press.

World

Finland doubling NATO's border with Russia in blow to Putin



AP

Finnish soldier participates in the amphibious operations as part of NATO sea exercises BALTOPS 2015 in Ustka, Poland, on June 17, 2015

BRUSSELS (AP)—The blue-and-white Finnish flag rises outside NATO headquarters Tuesday afternoon, making Finland a member and doubling Russia's border with the world's biggest security alliance.

The move is a strategic and political blow to President Vladimir Putin, who has long complained about NATO's expansion toward Russia and partly used that as a justification for his country's war with Ukraine.

"What we see is that President Putin went to war against Ukraine with a declared aim to get less NATO," NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said. "He's getting the exact opposite."

Like all NATO members, Finland will benefit from the collective security guarantee that an attack on one is considered an attack on all.

NATO has said that it has no immediate intention to step up its presence in Finland. Some members have deployed troops there for war games over the last year.

Russia immediately warned that it would bolster forces near Finland if NATO sends any additional troops or equipment to what will be its 31st member country.

Finland has substantial, well-trained armed forces with elite troops capable of operating in the sub-zero temperatures of the high north. The Nordic country also has a large reserve army and is investing heavily in new equipment, including dozens of U.S.-made F-35 fighter jets.

The Finnish flag rising between the French and the Estonian in a ceremony scheduled for 1330 GMT will complete the fastest ac-

cession process in the organization's recent history.

Alarmed by Russia's invasion of Ukraine last year, Finland applied to join NATO in May 2022. Neighboring Sweden also applied, but its accession process will take longer.

The ceremony falls on NATO's very own birthday, the 74th anniversary of the signing of its founding Washington Treaty on April 4, 1949.

"It will be a good day for Finland's security, for Nordic security, and for NATO as a whole," Stoltenberg told reporters on Monday on the eve of a meeting of alliance's foreign ministers in Brussels.

Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Grushko warned that Moscow would bolster its own forces "in case of deployment of forces of other NATO members on the territory of Finland."

Russia blames Ukraine for bomb that killed military blogger

Russian authorities blamed Ukrainian intelligence agencies on Monday for orchestrating a bombing at a St. Petersburg cafe that killed a Russian military blogger who fervently supported Moscow's invasion of Ukraine, and they arrested a suspect.

Ukrainian authorities did not directly respond to the accusation, but President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in reference to the attack that he doesn't think about events in Russia, and a senior Ukrainian official earlier described the bombing as part of Russia's internal turmoil.

Vladlen Tatarsky, 40, was killed Sunday as he led a discussion at the cafe on the banks of the Neva River in the historic heart of Russia's

second-largest city, officials said. Tatarsky, who had filed regular reports from the front lines in Ukraine, was the pen name for Maxim Fomin. He had accumulated more than 560,000 followers on his Telegram messaging app channel.

The bombing, which also wounded more than 30 other people, was the latest attack inside Russia on a high-profile pro-war figure. Last year, a nationalist TV commentator was assassinated when a bomb exploded in her SUV outside Moscow.

Investigators said they believe the bomb at the cafe was hidden in a bust of Tatarsky that a member of the audience gave him just before the explosion. A video showed

him joking as he removed a wrapper to reveal the gold-colored bust of a man wearing a helmet, "What a handsome guy!"

Russian authorities announced the arrest of Darya Trepova, a 26-year-old St. Petersburg resident seen on video presenting Tatarsky with the bust, and classified the case as an act of terrorism. Police had detained Trepova for participating in a rally against the war on Feb. 24, 2022, the day of the invasion, and she spent 10 days in jail.

Designating the case as a terrorist act gives authorities more power to pursue their investigation, increases the maximum punishment and limits the rights of suspects. (AP)

ASIAN BRIEFS

Belize, Guatemala reaffirm Taiwan ties during Tsai visit

MEXICO CITY (AP)—Belize on Monday reaffirmed its diplomatic ties with Taiwan, the second country to do so in a week as Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen travels across Central America in an effort to shore up a dwindling number of allies. "Together we can promote our shared values like democracy, the right of the people to self-determination and respect for international law," Johnny Briceño, Belize's prime minister, said in a speech before the country's National Assembly. Belize follows in the footsteps of Guatemala, another ally of Taiwan, whose leader declared its relationship with the self-governed island "unchange-

Good Housekeeping

How to maximize the power of mix and match in furniture pairings

By KATIE LAUGHRIDGE
Tribune News Service

One are the days of placing matching big-box furniture in a room and calling it good. And while it's easy to fall into the trap of following a specific trend, often I find that the spaces with the most impact are the ones that effortlessly combine elements from multiple periods, styles and places.

The trick is to ensure that everything ties together. The whole point of mixing styles is to create a space that truly defines you, and can't be re-created somewhere else. It's all about finding the right balance of color, texture, style and proportion to create a unified and visually appealing look.

Let's explore some tips and tricks to help you mix and match furniture like a pro, no matter for what style you're aiming.

For tight spaces

Finding the right pairings for a tight space can be challenging, but with some thoughtful planning, you can make the most of it. The first step is to measure your room and determine the size and shape of your furniture pieces. When selecting furniture, it might be a good idea to choose items that can serve multiple purposes, like an ottoman that can serve as extra seating in a pinch. This will help you save space and maximize functionality.

Two apartment sofas facing each other is a beautiful way to fill a space and maximize seating, especially in a room without a television. It's the set-up I have in my own living room and is fantastic for entertaining. But what I'd consider the most tried-and-true way to provide maximum flexibility of seating for guests (and lounging when no one else is around) is to use a sectional-style sofa and compact, small-framed chairs. The sectional gives space to spread out if you need it, and the chairs add some pleasing visual contrast to the design without adding too much bulk to the space.

But the best thing about a small



HANDOUT

A compact chair adds to both the color and texture-filled living room.

room is that by adding just a few finishing touches, you can make your space feel ultra-stylish in a breeze. Treat yourself to a sculptural side table, a glam new accessory or simply a few faux flowers, and the entire space will feel big-budget.

Two-tone furniture

Two-tone furniture is another fun way to create pairings in your custom pieces. For designer-forward kid-friendly spaces, you can apply performance fabric to the seat of your piece and then any fabric you like on the body where it won't get as much wear (in theory). Even if practicality isn't your primary concern, going two-tone injects a little texture and personality into the piece.

The charcoal fabric on these two-tone chairs adds interest to the design and is a great partner to the polka dot.

The value of repetition

Repetition works wonders in design. When curating your look with mixed and matched furniture, try to work in a common element or two to tie the pieces and overall space together. Using a defined color palette,



HANDOUT

A scalloped wicker coffee table injects personality into this new traditional blue and white design.

having a couple wood pieces from the same time period, or carrying a motif throughout help to add a touch of polish. To create cohesion in your design, repeat a chosen color, finish, material, shape or pattern two to three times. This also helps to make the space feel curated.



HANDOUT

This heaviness of this bedside table is balanced by the light fabric of the bedding design.



HANDOUT

Swirling vines with leaves are repeated in the fabric of the Vallone chair, the tape trim on the pillow, and on the blue and white accessories on the shelving.

A balancing act

When it comes to mixing and matching furniture pieces to create your style, it might feel like a little bit of a balancing act. Too few details and it feels like something's missing; too much of the same is uninteresting. Cultivating balance is essential when mixing furniture styles. Do the colors and scale feel evenly dispersed throughout the space? Does anything

need to be moved? Don't be afraid to take a step away and come back with fresh eyes.

Mixing and matching your furniture is the perfect way to achieve the sought-after collected look. Remember, good design is more of an evolution than a destination, and collected spaces take time to build. I hope you enjoy the journey as much as I do!



HANDOUT

A scalloped wicker coffee table injects personality into this new traditional blue and white design.



HANDOUT

With its metal frame, sharp angles and pop of leather, this chair is the star of the show.

Life & Style

A duo once more, Ben Affleck, Matt Damon come up for 'Air'

NEW YORK (AP)—While Ben Affleck and Matt Damon were writing “The Last Duel,” their first screenplay together since their 1997 breakthrough, “Good Will Hunting,” they noticed that something in their winding and usually separate careers had been missing.

“I remember my wife said to me one day: ‘I haven’t heard you laugh like that in 15 years,’” says Damon. “We came out of that experience going: Why aren’t we doing this more often? And getting into your 50s you just go: If we don’t make it a priority, it’s just not going to happen.”

Now, more than 25 years after they set out to make it in Hollywood—so entwined that they once shared a bank account—

Affleck and Damon are once again a team. Affleck directs and Damon stars in “Air,” the new film about Nike’s courting of Michael Jordan that opens in theaters Wednesday.

That film, an Amazon Studios original being released theatrically by MGM, is only part of their new collaboration. It’s the first release from their new production company, Artists Equity. Affleck is the chief executive, Damon is head of content. Part of its mission is to give prominent crew and cast members a piece of profits.

To Affleck, “Air”—in which the then-upstart Nike pursues a sneaker deal with Jordan while his mother (played by Viola Davis) ad-

vocates for his worth—represents what they hope to do with their new company.

“We believe there are a lot of really meaningful artists on the crew who are underappreciated and undervalued and make a huge difference in the quality of the experience in a film,” Affleck said in an interview alongside Damon. “We want to sort of take the approach taken towards Michael Jordan, which is to recognize the artists and say: You’re the ones who deserve to be compensated for this. You’re generating the art, the beauty, the majesty.”

And with “Air,” they may have already generated a hit. The film, which co-stars Jason Bateman, Chris Tucker, Chris

Messina and Julius Tennon, has drawn rave reviews since its premiere at SXSW. Amazon was so pleased with it that the streamer decided to give it a nationwide release in theaters.

All of which accounts for some of the reasons why Affleck—despite the “Sad Ben Affleck” memes and viral videos of him looking morose at the Grammys—is genuinely happy. There have certainly been ups and downs; Affleck has previously been candid about past battles with alcoholism. But Affleck now finds himself, as he says, “famously unhappy” despite feeling the opposite.

Those memes? Affleck

blames them on out-of-context moments and the result of always having a dozen cameramen pointed at him.

“The photograph in isolation looks like: Look at this unhappy fellow,” Affleck says. “But actually, I’m pretty happy. I have a good life. I’m very lucky. Despite the memes. Maybe my resting face leaves something to be desired.”

“You have resting b--- face,” chimes Damon, laughing.

But after a tumultuous run as Batman and another turbulent run in the tabloids, Affleck is back to making the kinds of movies that won him best picture a decade ago, with “Argo.”

The Los Angeles-based Art-

ists Equity is a kind of bookend to the duo’s fabled beginning. They launched it to help set the course for their next chapter (Damon is 52, Affleck 50) and make spending time together more of a requisite. It also allows Affleck to be regularly with his kids from his previous marriage to Jennifer Garner. Last year, he wed Jennifer Lopez.

One person they’ve convinced in their new endeavor is Viola Davis. Though Jordan’s mother was originally a very small role, the NBA legend stressed her importance to the story when meeting with Affleck. Jordan said Davis was the only actor for the part.



ASHLEY LANDIS/AP

Ben Affleck, left, and Matt Damon pose for a portrait to promote the film “Air” on Monday, March 27, 2023, at the Four Seasons Hotel in Los Angeles.

ENTERTAINMENT TIDBITS

Disney developing live-action ‘Moana’ with Dwayne Johnson

NEW YORK (AP)—“Moana” will be the latest Walt Disney Co. animation to get the live-action treatment, and at least one star is coming back. Disney chief executive Bob Iger announced a live-action “Moana” remake is in development Monday in a call with investors. The production is in the early stages—no director has been announced—but Dwayne Johnson is set to return as the demigod Maui. “This story is my culture, and this story is emblematic of our people’s grace and warrior strength,” said Johnson. “I wear this culture proudly

on my skin and in my soul, and this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to reunite with Maui, inspired by the mana and spirit of my late grandfather, High Chief Peter Maivia, is one that runs very deep for me.” Drawn from Polynesian myths and buoyed by songs from Lin-Manuel Miranda, “Moana” was a massive hit for Disney in 2016, grossing \$643.3 million worldwide. Auli’i Cravalho, who voiced Moana in the original, is to be an executive producer on the live-action version.

‘Indiana Jones’ to premiere at Cannes with tribute to Ford

Indiana Jones is swinging into the French Riviera. “Indiana

Jones and the Dial of Destiny,” the fifth film in the Harrison Ford adventure series, will make its world premiere at the Cannes Film Festival on May 18, festival organizers announced Monday. Cannes will also pay a tribute to Ford for his career. The premiere of “Dial of Destiny,” directed by James Mangold, comes 15 years after 2008’s “Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull” premiered at the French festival. “Dial of Destiny,” billed as the final chapter in the franchise, will open in U.S. theaters June 28. “Dial of Destiny,” which had been rumored to be heading to Cannes, adds a second megawatt premiere to this year’s festival, which kicks off May 16. (AP)

Firefighter's wife alarmed by man's behavior at party

DEAR ABBY: Last night I went to a party where my husband introduced me to all of his co-workers except for one young female who kept hanging out beside him. She’s about 25 years younger than he is, and he’s her boss.

I thought it was odd that he didn’t introduce me. I finally introduced myself because it felt so awkward. He often talks about her (affectionately, in my opinion) and what a hard worker she is, plus that her mother is going through cancer treatment so he feels bad for her.

Abby, my husband has worked with this young woman’s father for more than 25 years and has always talked about how much he dislikes him. He says she’s the “polar opposite” of her dad. These people are firefighters, and my husband is their battalion chief.

Our marriage has suffered because of his 25 years of alcoholism, and although he’s no longer drinking, the effect on me continues. I have learned to pick my battles because he will deny anything that I ask or change a story so I seem “crazy.” My question is, should I ask my husband why he didn’t introduce me? The whole situation didn’t feel right.

UNCOMFORTABLE IN THE WEST

DEAR UNCOMFORTABLE: Sure. You have the right to ask your husband anything you wish. Whether you can get an honest answer from someone who regularly gaslights you is another question entirely. After he denies it, tell your

husband how glad you are to know that nothing is going on because, unlike years ago, sexual impropriety between a boss and a subordinate could cost both parties their careers. Then, to ensure that you haven’t been exposed to an STD, make an appointment with your doctor to be tested.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: Every year, my wife makes a photo book of the family and sends it to everyone. This year, she included a picture taken during a nephew’s birthday party. In it, my father is wearing a politically charged T-shirt, except she photo-shopped the offending (to us) message out. When I asked her to not do that, but instead to remove the entire photo, she refused. She said there were no other good photos from the party, so her only option was to remove the message on the shirt.

I’m opposed because my father will be angry when he realizes his shirt has been altered in the photo. He will then bring it up at every opportunity and berate me, my wife and even my mother about how terrible it was to do that, and for us not to bother ever sending him another photo book again, despite my mother looking forward to it every year. What is your advice for us?

OUT OF FOCUS IN FLORIDA

DEAR OUT OF FOCUS: It is commonplace for images to be blurred in the media out of concern that they might be offensive, or seem to promote a product. I have to wonder why your father would wear a T-shirt with a message on it

DEAR ABBY

BY ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



that he knew would offend the people around him. He does not have the right to censor what mail your mother can receive. Because your wife created the book, she has the right to determine its contents. She should send it to her MOTHER-IN-LAW ONLY and advise her not to show it to Dad.

■ ■ ■

DEAR READERS: At sundown, the first night of Passover begins. This major Jewish holiday celebrates the most momentous event in Jewish history -- the liberation of the Jewish people from slavery in Egypt. Happy Passover to my readers who observe this important holiday. -- LOVE, ABBY

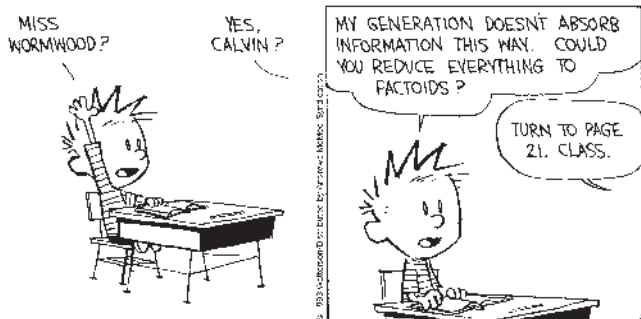
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Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



AT LEAST OUR TELEVISIONS UNDERSTAND US.



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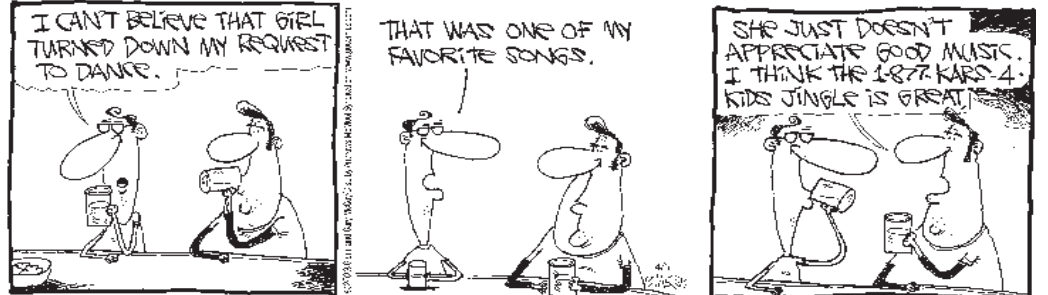
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Chorus syllables

5 Chinese chairman

8 Urban haze

12 Airline to Tel Aviv

13 German auto

14 Hoo-ha

15 Fit together

17 Battery fluid

18 Arcade pioneer

19 Rail nails

21 Small pie

24 Louvre treasures

25 Light touches

28 Guitarist

30 "Caught ya!"

33 Italian article

34 Pious sort

35 Little rascal

36 Luau dish

37 Actor Guinness

38 Sty chow

DOWN

20 Treaty

22 Authentic

23 Samples

25 Young dog

26 Year in Madrid

27 Coccyx

29 Foot fraction

31 Med. plan option

32 Smart-phone download

34 Long tale

38 Brief rainfall

40 Pinnacles

42 100%

43 Holiday entrees

44 Six-sided state

45 Sch. supporters

47 New York's — Field

48 Shoelace snarl

49 Author Ferber

52 Ruckus

53 Luggage tags, e.g.

Solution time: 23 mins.

Yesterday's answer 4-5

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Pharrell Williams, 50; Mike McCready, 57; Mitch Pileggi, 71; Agnetha Faltskog, 73.

Happy Birthday: Refuse to let emotional matters take over your life. Think your plans through from beginning to end and find a practical solution that helps you and those you love. It's OK to dream, but when it comes to what matters most, a reserved attitude will help you find the most efficient way to get things done to your liking. Your numbers are 5, 17, 20, 23, 26, 38, 49.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Anger will impact performance. A change of plans shouldn't cost you financially. Examine details before you agree to something. You'll get the highest return from the time spent fixing up your surroundings. Efficiency is the key to your success. ★★

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Think before you act. Have a foolproof plan in place before you begin. Use your imagination to find an exciting way to attract interest and everything else will fall into place. A passionate approach will convince others to support and contribute. ★★

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Keep an open mind, but refuse to believe everything you hear. Verify information before you accept or pass it along. Spend time learning, developing and preparing for the future. Find a new way to use your skills. ★★★★★

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Do what's required, and don't look back. Now is not the time to let others take over or beat you at your own game. Put your en-

ergy to good use and finish what you start. Don't reveal secrets; protect your reputation. ★★

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Look for opportunities instead of piggybacking on someone else's good fortune. Think for yourself and follow your heart and your dreams. Use your charm and take the initiative to personalize whatever you present or promote. Step into the spotlight and shine. ★★★★★

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You'll discover valuable information if you listen and observe. Your ability to size up situations and turn whatever you do into something worthwhile will make you the leader everyone wants to follow. Love and romance will enhance your personal life. ★★

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Hide your feelings until you know how others will react. Don't make a fuss or start a feud that can influence the outcome of a partnership or proposition. Immerse yourself in quality control and getting things right the first time. ★★

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Don't hide when embracing life and what it has to offer is required. Indulge in conversations that appeal to someone close to you, and you will build a strong relationship. The changes you make at home should add to your security. ★★

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): It's OK to do things differently if you are prepared to prove your point and the value of taking the road less traveled. Trusting and believing in your ability will grow on those who question your validity. Don't fold under pressure. ★★★★★

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): A change is necessary if you want to protect your position and reputation and maintain your status quo. Put more effort into how you live and run your personal life. Pay attention to how you look and represent yourself to others. ★★

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Listen and you'll be privy to information that can help you avoid making a mistake. Don't feel you must fall into line and be someone's puppet. Look for opportunities that feature you, not someone else. Hold on to your cash. ★★★★★

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): A solid investment will change your life. Join forces with someone who cares about the same things as you and you'll find it easier to build a rewarding future. Love and romance are on the rise and will enrich your life. ★★

Birthday Baby: You are outgoing, impatient and proactive. You are stylish and creative.

★: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ★★: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ★★★: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ★★★★★: Aim high; start new projects. ★★★★★: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

		7	2			1	3				
5					8			6			
							7	4	1		
		4							3		
		3				8			7	6	
		6	7	2			5				
3	5	6			7	2			9		
4				5							
		2			4	6	8			3	

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

2	4	6	3	5	9	8	1	7
5	3	7	8	6	1	2	4	9
9	8	1	2	4	7	5	3	6
7	9	8	4	1	5	6	2	3
1	5	3	6	7	2	9	8	4
4	6	2	9	3	8	1	7	5
8	2	4	5	9	3	7	6	1
6	1	5	7	2	4	3	9	8
3	7	9	1	8	6	4	5	2

Difficulty: ★★★

4-5

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WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

MILITARY SPOUSES ARE FABULOUS

Solution: 6 letters

S T F I N A N C E S A I L O R
T A N E G A I R R A M E D A L
R N C A M R E T T E L B A T S
O A E R R M S A N C L A Y O L
D D I I I E E Y V R L A V A N
A A S E L F L E S S U E T R U
S P I O M I S O P A R T N E R
S T R W M E S C T S C D E C T
A I I A F E R E E R A C I R U
B N F F I E V A R R L A T E R
M G O R E G S I E N M L A I I
A R R E C N A T S I D L P F N
T O F S R A E T A I P U O R G
W I O R E H E B B E T U L A S
L T E N A C I O U S S E R T S

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4/5

Adapting, Airman, Ambassador, Base, Benefits, Call, Calm, Career, Change, Dare, Distance, Effort, Family, Fierce, Finances, Group, Hero, Letter, Life, Love, Loyal, Marriage, Medal, Naval, Nurturing, Overseas, Partner, Patient, Resilient, Return, Roles, Sacrifice, Sailor, Salute, Selfless, Stable, Stress, Tears, Tenacious, Tolerant, Visit, Wife, Worries

Yesterday's Answer: Birds

The NEW Volume 70 can be purchased online at
www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

UConn holds off late San Diego State surge in title victory



HOUSTON (AP)—UConn got the shots it wanted and made life mis-

erable for San Diego State defensively, looking like it was going to turn the national championship game into a runaway.

The Huskies knew the Aztecs would push, scrap and claw their way back. Their defense was too good, their will too strong.

For a stretch, the Huskies buckled. It still ended in another rout.

UConn dominated at both ends early and pulled away after San Diego State's defensive clamp down, finishing off one of the most dominant NCAA Tournament runs with a 76-59 win over the Aztecs on Monday night.

"We keep our composure," UConn guard Jordan Hawkins said. "It doesn't matter what we go through, we're going to stick together no matter what."

Picking apart San Diego State's menacing defense while draining the Aztecs' offensive confidence, the Huskies (31-8) had fans wondering whether they should keep watching, building a 16-point lead.

San Diego State (32-7)

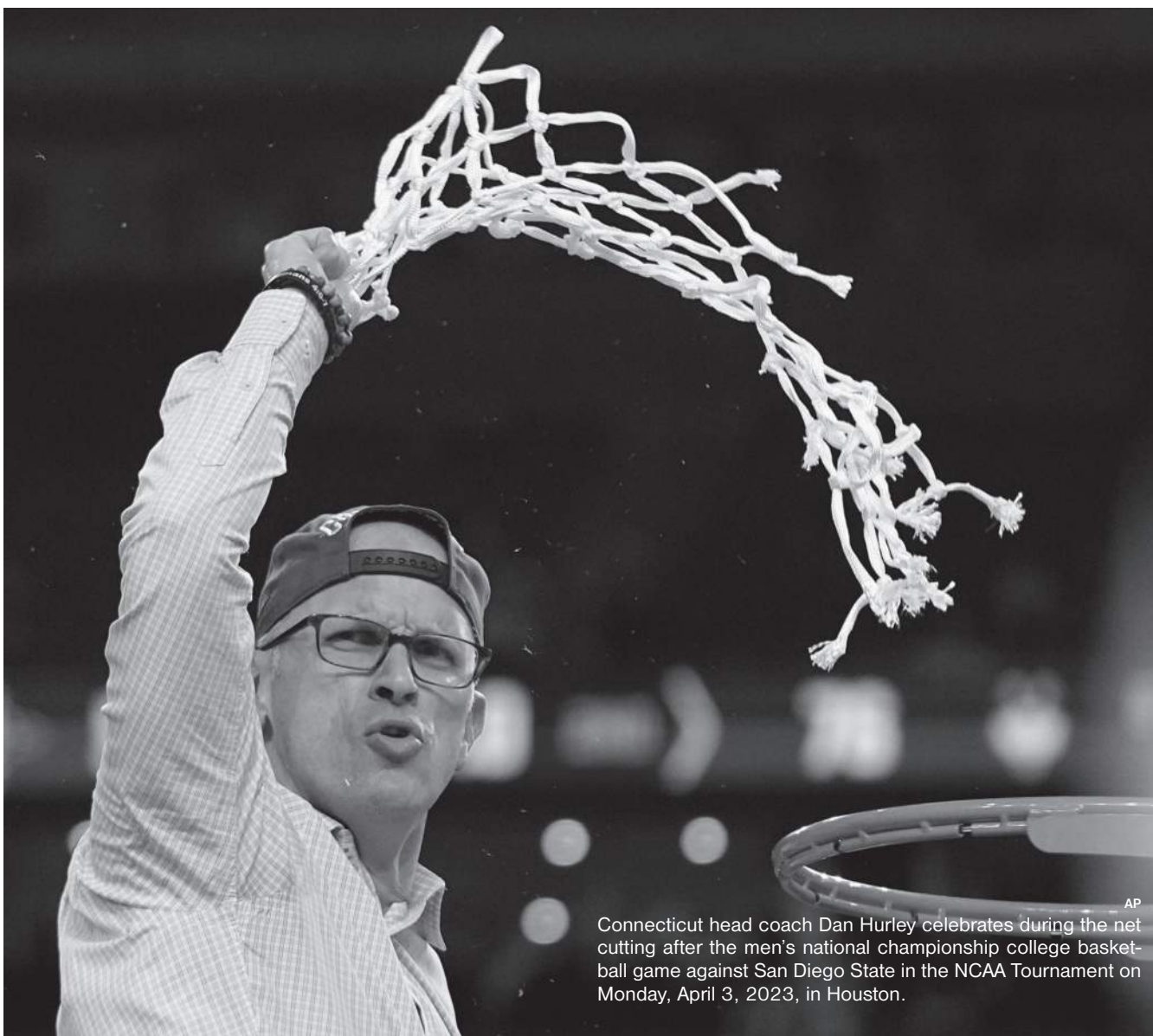
got back in it by getting in the Huskies' faces, trimming the lead to five with five minutes left. UConn responded by fighting back, pushing the lead until it had the fifth all-double-digit run through the NCAA Tournament since the bracket expanded in 1985.

The title was UConn's fifth, matching Duke and Indiana for fourth most all-time. It was the Huskies' first national title since 2014 and first under coach Dan Hurley, who added to his family's legacy with another title for the mantle.

"I've had my own path, my own journey," Hurley said. "I've probably done it to myself by being such an intense, fiery coach, that people have always focused more on the sideline kind of antics than my total body of work over the course of my career."

The Huskies made it look easy early, just as they had the previous five NCAA Tournament games.

Adama Sanogo established deep post position early, scoring inside while forcing the Aztecs to shade toward him or double team. UConn's guards repeatedly



Connecticut head coach Dan Hurley celebrates during the net cutting after the men's national championship college basketball game against San Diego State in the NCAA Tournament on Monday, April 3, 2023, in Houston.

Long drought seals SDSU's fate in title game against UConn

HOUSTON (AP)—A magical journey put San Diego State in its first Final Four.

A thrilling buzzer-beater by Lamont Butler landed the Aztecs one win away from a national title.

Hot early shooting Monday night helped them race to an early lead against the mighty UConn Huskies.

Then things fell apart.

For more than 11 tortured minutes in the title game, no matter what they tried, the Aztecs could not make a field goal in their 76-59 loss.

"It's difficult to play like that," Butler said.

Fighting against a stifling defense, they missed hook shots, had layups blocked, badly missed wide-open 3s and saw easy jump shots fall short.

The Aztecs (32-7) took shot after shot after shot — 14 in all as the clock ticked, ticked and ticked — but no matter what they tried nothing would fall.

"We were talking about it for sure," Butler said. "And we were trying to figure out what we can do to stop the scoring drought and create advantages for ourselves. We tried but things weren't working."

By the time Darrion Trammell mercifully made a jump shot with about 5 1/2 minutes left in the first half, the Aztecs

had seen a four-point lead turn into a 26-17 hole.

A team that got here on the strength of its vaunted defense was in the end done in by an offense that went cold at the worst possible moment.

"It's the national championship game, a lot of things had to go right on our end in order to win," guard Matt Bradley said. "And when you're missing shots and turning the ball over and even when you're playing hard on defense, it's not going to be enough. So we learned that tonight for sure."

The Aztecs rallied from a 14-point deficit to beat Florida Atlantic in the national semifinal, with Butler's game-winner at the buzzer marking the first time in Final Four history that a buzzer-beater took a team from trailing to a victory.

This time there would be no such heroics. They did go on a second half run to make it interesting, though.

San Diego State used a 14-4 spurt, with the first four points from Jaedon LeDee, to get within 60-55 with about five minutes to go.

But Jordan Hawkins made a 3-pointer seconds after that to start a 9-0 run that shut the door on any designs the Aztecs had on another remarkable comeback.

Though their defense had



San Diego State guard Micah Parrish and guard Tyler Broughton sit in the locker room after their loss against Connecticut in the men's national championship college basketball game in the NCAA Tournament on Monday, April 3, 2023, in Houston.

been the star of this Cinderella's tournament run entering Monday night, their offense had done plenty to complement it.

Through their first five games in the tournament, the Aztecs shot an average of 42.48%. In the biggest game in school history Monday night, they shot a tournament-low 32% — a number significantly lowered by a 28.6% first half.

It was their second-lowest shooting percentage of the season, behind the 31.7% they shot in a 62-57 win over Utah State in the Mountain West Conference Tournament title

game. Their 24 first-half points was the second-fewest they'd managed all season.

There were no tears in San Diego State's locker room after the loss that snapped a nine-game winning streak, but rather a bunch of guys who were proud of how far they got, even if they came up short.

"We were the only ones who believed we could get here," Trammell said. "We surpassed our expectations honestly."

Added Keshad Johnson, who led the team with 14 points Monday night.

"I'm sure we put our school's name on the map and I'm proud of that," he said.

found cracks in San Diego's defense, getting into the lane for floaters and kick-outs for 3s.

The Huskies were downright nasty defensively, swatting shots, jumping into passing lanes, contesting shots all over the floor.

Sanogo, Adam Karaban and 7-foot-2 freshman Donovan Clingan caused so many problems at the rim, the Aztecs started avoiding the paint altogether. Nathan Mensah even passed up an open jump hook to pass to a teammate who wasn't looking. Hawkins followed the turnover with a 3-pointer that put the Huskies up 26-14.

Even when the Aztecs got open shots, they couldn't get any to fall. San Diego missed 14 straight in a span of 11:07 as UConn stretched its lead to 36-20.

"Their length bothered us at the rim," San Diego State coach Brian Dutcher said.

The Aztecs like to muddy the waters and finally were able to bog the game down to their liking in the second half. San Diego State kept the Huskies from getting those easy shots inside, stayed connected with their perimeter shooters and cut off those drives into the lane.

The problem: the shots still weren't falling, so UConn's lead hovered in double figures.

Overplaying got the Aztecs back in it.

San Diego State got a couple of steals to set up transition baskets and they gained confidence with each shot that fell. The Aztecs rallied from at least eight down to win their previous three games, and rattled the Huskies with a 9-0 run, pulling within 56-50 as NRG Stadium went from snoozy to a potential doozy.

"We knew when we were down, it wasn't over with," San Diego State guard Adam Seiko said. "We've been in that position many times this year."

So had UConn. Playing in the brutal Big East had prepared the Huskies well for this moment.

Hawkins hit a 3-pointer off a screen to send UConn's fans bolting from their seats, San Diego State fans slumping in theirs. Their confidence back, the Huskies reeled off nine straight points to push the lead back to 14, forcing the Aztecs into rushed shots in an attempt to pull off a miracle that never happened.

San Diego State's latest comeback bid fell short, leaving the Aztecs one game short of their first national championship.

The Huskies kept the lead in double digits, giving Hurley time to pump his fists before the confetti canons had even fired.

A championship earned.

Villar homers twice, Giants hit 7 in romp over White Sox



CHICAGO
(AP)—The

San Francisco Giants were looking for a spark from their offense. And did they ever get one.

David Villar hit two of San Francisco's seven home runs, Anthony DeSclafani tossed three-hit ball over six scoreless innings and the Giants pounded the Chicago White Sox 12-3 on Monday afternoon.

"I think it was just continuing to get our 'A' swings off," Villar said. "The important thing for us is continuing to get those really good swings off and not being hesitant about making them. If we're going to make a swing, let's make it with intent. I think that really showed today, one through nine."

Villar hit a solo homer in the fifth and his first career grand slam in the ninth. Joc Pederson, Michael Conforto, Thairo Estrada, Mike Yastrzemski and Bryce Johnson also went deep for San Francisco, which hit its most home runs since July 2, 2002, at Colorado. The team record is eight at Milwaukee on April 30, 1961, when Willie Mays hit four.

The Giants broke out in a big way after being shut out twice while losing two of three in their opening series at the New York Yankees. They went deep five times against starter Michael Kopech and spoiled Chicago's first home game under manager Pedro Grifol.

Pederson got the home run derby going when he connected leading off a two-run second. He was also robbed of a two-run drive in the third by center fielder Luis Robert Jr.

The Giants hit four more homers in the fifth, the first time they hit four in an inning since Sept. 18, 2011, at Colorado. Conforto and Estrada went back to back with one out, and so did Yastrzemski and Villar with two down, extending the lead to 7-0.

Johnson finished the home run parade with the first of his career — a solo drive in the ninth. He said he got doused in the clubhouse with "ketchup, mustard, everything you could possibly put on a pancake."

DeSclafani picked up his first win since Oct. 1, 2021. The 32-year-old right-hander was limited to five starts last season because of a right ankle injury. But he felt like he was showing more of the form that made him a 13-game winner in 2021 during spring training.

"It sure feels good to throw



San Francisco Giants' Mike Yastrzemski watches his solo home run during the fifth inning of the Chicago White Sox season home opening baseball game Monday, April 3, 2023.

a good game, especially after last year and dealing with what I did," he said. "Good for Game 1."

ANGELS 7, MARINERS 3

SEATTLE (AP)—Shohei Ohtani hit his second home run of the season, Taylor Ward added a two-run shot and Los Angeles topped Seattle.

Ohtani drove a 1-1 pitch from George Kirby (0-1) an estimated 431 feet into the right-center seats in the fifth inning for a 4-2 lead. Kirby gave up only one long ball during the final three months last season.

Luis Rengifo had a pair of RBI singles, both scoring Jake Lamb. Mike Trout was on base five times with a single, three walks and a hit by pitch.

After losing on opening night, the Angels have won three straight while the Mariners have dropped four in a row after winning their opener.

Ryan Tepera (1-0) won in relief of Reid Detmers.

BREWERS 10, METS 0

MILWAUKEE (AP)—Brewers rookie Brice Turang hit a grand slam for his first major league homer, capping a seven-run fifth inning that sent Milwaukee past New York in its home opener.

Brian Anderson also homered and Freddy Peralta (1-0) pitched six innings of two-hit ball as the Brewers won their third straight. Shut out in its first 16 innings this season, Milwaukee has scored 22 runs in its last 20 innings.

The day started poorly for the Mets when Carlos Carrasco (0-1) received a pitch-clock violation before

throwing his first pitch. That set the tone for the rest of an afternoon in which they compiled more clock violations (four) than hits (three). New York has lost 14 of its last 17 games in Milwaukee. Bryse Wilson worked three innings for his second career save.

TWINS 11, MARLINS 1

MIAMI (AP)—Max Kepler hit a leadoff homer, Joey Gallo added a three-run shot and Minnesota routed Miami to remain unbeaten this season.

Trevor Larnach also went deep and Tyler Mahle (1-0) struck out seven in five solid innings for the Twins, who swept their opening series in Kansas City and are 4-0 for the ninth time in franchise history. The last time was 2017.

Johnny Cueto (0-1) exited with right biceps tightness in the second inning after giving up two home runs in his Marlins debut.

Kepler left in the fourth with knee soreness.

RAYS 6, NATIONALS 2

WASHINGTON (AP)—Luke Raley homered twice, Drew Rasmussen pitched six shutout innings and Tampa Bay defeated Washington for the first 4-0 start in team history.

Isaac Paredes also went deep for the Rays, who have outscored their opponents 27-5. Raley had his first career multi-homer game.

Rasmussen (1-0) allowed two singles and didn't walk a batter while striking out seven.

Trevor Williams (0-1) gave up four runs — three earned — over five innings in his Nationals debut.

Jeimer Candelario hom-

ered and Dominic Smith had two hits for Washington.

REDS 7, CUBS 6

CINCINNATI (AP)—Jason Vosler hit a go-ahead, three-run homer in the fifth inning and Cincinnati held off Chicago.

It was the second home run of the season for Vosler, a non-roster invite to spring training. After entering as a pinch-runner in the second, he connected off Drew Smyly (0-1).

Cody Bellinger launched an early three-run homer for his first hit with the Cubs. Eric Hosmer's two-run double off Alex Young (1-0) put Chicago ahead 6-4 in the fifth.

Derek Law stranded two runners in the ninth to earn his first save since 2019. The Reds are 3-1 after starting 3-22 last season.

YANKEES 8, PHILLIES 1

NEW YORK (AP)—Gleyber Torres hit his 100th career homer and reached base five times, Anthony Rizzo added a two-run shot and New York blew out winless Philadelphia.

The defending NL champion Phillies are 0-4 for the first time since 2016. The only team to win a World Series after starting 0-4 was the 2021 Atlanta Braves.

Nestor Cortes (1-0) allowed one run and seven hits over five innings and made a key defensive play in his season debut. Franchy Cordero made his first start for the Yankees and hit a two-run double in a five-run fifth.

Taijuan Walker (0-1), making his Philadelphia debut after signing a \$72 million, four-year contract, allowed four runs and four

hits in 4 1/3 innings. Alec Bohm had three hits for the Phillies, who have been outscored 37-12.

PIRATES 7, RED SOX 6

BOSTON (AP)—Bryan Reynolds hit two solo homers, Jason Delay added another and Pittsburgh edged Boston.

On a mild evening when the teams combined for six home runs, Masataka Yoshida hit his first since joining the Red Sox from Japan. Yoshida and Triston Casas each had a two-run drive, and Rafael Devers added a solo shot.

Duane Underwood Jr. (1-0) worked 1 1/3 scoreless innings and David Bednar got his second save.

Red Sox starter Kutter Crawford (0-1) needed 32 pitches to get through the first inning and lasted four. He yielded seven runs and eight hits, including three homers.

ROYALS 9, BLUE JAYS 5

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP)—Brady Singer pitched five effective innings, MJ Melendez hit a two-run homer and Kansas City beat Toronto for its first victory of the season.

Nicky Lopez had a two-run triple and Bobby Witt Jr. delivered a pair of RBI singles as the Royals opened a 7-0 lead in the fourth against José Berrios (0-1) and gave Matt Quattraro his first win as manager.

Singer (1-0) allowed just two hits — doubles by Matt Chapman — with three walks and three strikeouts. He is 7-0 with a 1.68 ERA in his last 10 starts at Kauffman Stadium dating to June 26 last year.

ORIOLES 2, RANGERS 0

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP)—Texas outfielder Josh Smith was taken to a hospital after he was hit in the face by a pitch against Baltimore.

Smith, a left-handed batter, was struck on the right side of his face by a slider from Danny Coulombe. Gunnar Henderson and Jorge Mateo homered for the Orioles, and Tyler Wells provided a lift with five hitless innings in relief.

Orioles right-hander Kyle Bradish exited with a bruised foot after he was struck by Jonah Heim's line drive in the second. Coulombe (1-0) then got four outs before Wells entered.

Felix Bautista pitched a perfect ninth for his second save.

Texas' only hit was a second-inning single by Josh Jung. It was the first loss for the Rangers in four

games under new manager Bruce Bochy.

Jon Gray (0-1) allowed four hits in 6 1/3 innings. He struck out seven.

BRAVES 8, CARDINALS 4

ST. LOUIS (AP)—Ronald Acuña Jr. hit a three-run homer and finished a triple shy of the cycle to power Atlanta past St. Louis.

Ozzie Albies smacked a two-run homer and Austin Riley added a solo shot for the Braves.

Paul Goldschmidt, the 2022 NL MVP, hit his first home run of the season but the Cardinals stranded 11 runners.

Charlie Morton (1-0) gave up three runs and nine hits over 5 1/3 innings in his 21st career start against St. Louis.

Jake Woodford (0-1) went 4 1/3 innings and allowed six runs — including three homers.

PADRES 5, DIAMONDBACKS 4

SAN DIEGO (AP)—Pinch-hitter David Dahl and Ha-Seong Kim hit consecutive home runs to start the bottom of the ninth inning as San Diego stunned Arizona.

The Diamondbacks took a 4-3 lead on Evan Longoria's homer in the top of the ninth, two innings after rookie Corbin Carroll tied the game with a leadoff shot.

But the Padres came right back with Dahl's leadoff drive and Kim's long ball off Scott McGough (0-1), his first walk-off hit in the majors.

Tim Hill (1-0) got the win after getting two outs in the ninth.

Juan Soto also hit his first home run of the season for the Padres, who won their third straight.

TIGERS 7, ASTROS 6, 11 INNINGS

HOUSTON (AP)—Matt Vierling made a sprawling, bases-loaded catch and hit a tiebreaking, two-run homer in the 11th inning as Detroit rebounded from a meltdown in the ninth to beat Houston for its first win after an 0-3 start.

Detroit wasted a 4-0 lead but Riley Greene's seventh-inning homer off Bryan Abreu put the Tigers ahead 5-4. Vierling's backhand grab in right field on Mauricio Dubón's two-out liner stopped Houston's four-run rally in the fifth.

Yordan Alvarez homered and drove in four runs for the Astros.

Vierling, acquired from Philadelphia in an offseason trade, went deep in the 11th off Héctor Neris (0-1) and finished with four hits.

Trey Wingenter (1-0) pitched a perfect 10th, and Garrett Hill got his first save since 2017 at Santa Rosa Junior College.

Detroit avoided its first 0-4 start since 2008.

Lady Blue Jays hold back Lady Legals, 14-13

By LEIGH GASES

leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Lady Blue Jays are undefeated coming out of Round 1 in the women's division of the 2023 Budweiser Belau Amateur Softball Association League as they held back last Sunday at the DanDan Softball Field.

Top of the lineup Kianu Aldan and Rayna Deleon Guerrero started their offense with inside-the-park homeruns each

in the first inning after a run by the Lady Legals for a 4-1 game.

Back-to-back errors by the Lady Blue Jays on the field allowed the Lady Legals to capitalize in the second inning as multiple hits from the middle of the lineup to the top brought in eight runs to steal the lead.

The Lady Blue Jays then retaliated in the third as Rayna Deleon Guerrero, Bert Camacho, and Bong Babauta got on base via errors and ended the inning with five runs, for a tied 9-9 game.

The Lady Legals played great defense as line drives up the middle caused their pitcher Jovie Omar to take a dive twice but still caught the ball for the essential outs.

However, the Lady Blue Jays offense supported their pitcher til the very end as in the fourth, three runs came in and in the last, two more came for a 14-12 game.

Bert Camacho, Lady Blue Jays pitcher, tried to stop the bleeding and only allowed one run each inning until the last and



LEIGH GASES

Lady Blue Jays pitcher Bert Camacho managed to hold off the Lady Legals in a close 14-13 win in the 2023 Budweiser Belau Amateur Softball Association League last Sunday at the DanDan Softball Field.

Group 2 runners take to the track

By LEIGH GASES

leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Group 2 schools took to the track in the NMA/PSS All Schools Athletics 2022-2023 last Thursday at the Oleai Sports Complex track and field.

The schools are Agape Christian School, Garapan Elementary School, Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School, Mount Carmel School, Kagman Elementary School, Brilliant Star School, Grace Christian Academy, Tinian Elementary School, and Sinapalo Elementary School.

The 9U boys 60m Top 3 in Heat 1 were Daviray Indalecio from KES at 10.09; Vicente Cruz from TES 10.28; and teammate Crixus Nebriada came in third at 10.74 seconds.

In Heat 2, TES' Joedric Torres came in first at 10.45; second was teammate Miran Tamang at 10.7; and third was Jayvin Deleon Guerrero from GTC at 10.88 seconds.

Kintino Elieisar from GTC was the fastest in Heat 3 at 9.56 seconds; after him was Andrew Macaranas from TES at 10.84; third was Isa-

iah Taimanao from SES at 11.08 seconds.

In the 9U girls 60m Heat 1, it was dominated by Kaihani Maratita from KES at 10.6 seconds; Kihani Cepeda from TES claimed second at 10.91; and Divannie Torres from GCA came in third at 11.20 seconds.

Celina Gonzales from KES dominated Heat 2 at 10.81; Josie Torres from TES came second at 11.07; Ayana Olebuu from KES came in third at 11.28; and Milena Cepeda came in last at 12.18 seconds.

Heat 3 Top 3 was Anita Moses from TES at 10.24; Astrid Masiwemai from KES at 10.45; and Rudith Camacho from GTC at 11.30 seconds.

The 12U boys 200m Top 3 in Heat 1 was Thomas Erickson from TES at 33.89; Tanvir Hossain from SES at 34.94; and Lance Aldan from TES at 35.15 seconds.

Heat 2 was dominated by TES Jun Young Seo at 31.68; Conan Iakopo from GTC came in second at 32.51; and third was Francisco Castro from TES at 35.36 seconds.

In Heat 3, Kody Mendiola from SES came in first with 30.92; Reveal Escarlan from ACS came in second at 32.05; and third was Francisco Moses from TES with 33.23 seconds.

The 12U girls 200m Top 3 was Kiyara Villagomez from TES at 33.48; Ma'ina Salas from GTC at 35.07; and Adela Aderwangel from KES at 36.25 seconds.

Heat 2 first place was Krisha Aguero from SES at 34.28; second was Sarah Norita from GTC at 36.06; and teammate Kyria Ngiraked came in third at 38.07 seconds.

In the 9U boys 800m, Evan Poole from BSS came in first at 3:21; GCA's Beau Bauer came in second at 3:29; and third was Joedric Torres at 3:34.

In the 12U boys 800m, ACS' Reyvriel Escarlan came in first at 2:59; SES' Prudencio Manglona came in second at 3:11; and third was Inos Repeki from GTC at 3:15.

The 9U boys long jump event was dominated by Evan Pool at a distance of 3.1m; TES' Andrew Macaranas was second at 2.78m; and third was Jaydin Camacho from BSS at 2.55m.

The 9U girls long jump first and second was TES' Kihani Cepeda at 2.73m and Josie Torres at 2.58m. Third was Rudith Camacho at 2.45m.

Results of Friday's meet will be posted in the next issues of *Saipan Tribune*.



LEIGH GASES

Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School student Seth Norita attempts the long jump event of the NMA/PSS All Schools Athletics 2022-2023 last Thursday at the Oleai track and field.

managed to hold off the Lady Legals from doing further damage. The Lady Legals only put up one run at their last at bat for a close 14-13 final score.

With this win, the Lady Blue Jays have won all four of their games since the beginning of the season last month.

In the other women's division game that day, Team BDE defeated Lady Sufa, 8-6.

It was quiet for the first couple of innings but that changed in the third when the first two batters got on base and were brought in by Emy Oiteron and Allana Sumang for a 2-0 game.

Lady Sufa was still run-less in the third and in the fourth, BDE connected for two more runs. But in the fourth, Lady Sufa were finally on the scoreboard with three runs for a close

4-3 game, still in favor of BDE.

BDE were biding their time as they went scoreless for two innings as Lady Sufa scored two in the sixth. However, BDE broke through when it mattered with four big runs and shut out Lady Sufa as they brought it only one run in the last inning.

Results of the men's division will be posted in the next issues of *Saipan Tribune*.

PANGILINAN

From Page 20

He added that the final point was challenging to

get as the other team were trying their best too. "They played really hard and they did have that good fighting spirit. Every point matters."

They both thanked Tan Holdings, including Jordan's sister Janelle Pangilinan, Christy Villaflor, the high school students

CNMI'S

From Page 20

Athletics Championships in 2008. The race was during the hottest time of the day but he plugged along and managed the three hurdles and water jump per lap. He almost won the gold but was passed at the finish line by a runner from Norfolk Island. The conditions were extremely difficult but he was a true warrior the entire race," he said.

As well as his dominance in athletics, Barnes also knew Kabiriel as a very responsible and trustworthy guy outside the lines of the track and field.

"I used to administer all fun runs and road races in the 1990s. Jack would enter them and always be near the front runners. I also knew him as he worked at Safety 1st Systems CNMI, Inc. and was very knowledgeable about everything that was sold in the store."

James Lee, one of Kabiriel's Marianas Outrigger Club teammates, said the CNMI just didn't lose a great athlete but an exceptional hu-

man being.

"For me, he was not just a teammate or a great all-around athlete. He was a brother that I've known and gone to competition battles with half of my life. I've been either teammates or have been competing with him for the past two decades in track and field, volleyball, basketball, and then outrigger, not to mention we've worked together for three years when I was managing Safety 1st System.

Lee said he and Kabiriel were teammates in the Ol'Aces team in the early 1990s along with former *Saipan Tribune* reporter and all-around good guy Shan Seman, Wayne Pua, and Shane Ogumoro.

"If there's one thing I can always go back to from all the memories I have of him was his positive mindset on whatever situation he is facing. Whether it was training or competing, at work or throughout his battle with cancer, the genuine smile he had was always there and his positive attitude never faded. I was fortunate and blessed to have been his training partner, teammate, and a coworker for

the past two decades because I got to learn that trade from him and had done my best to apply that positive mindset into my everyday life, regardless if it's good or bad and win or lose," added Lee.

One of his triathlon teammates, Dirk Sharer, said more than his athletics gifts, Kabiriel will be most remembered for how he treated others kindly and with utmost respect.

"He did compete in triathlons and what I recall was not only his athletic ability, but his big smile and kindness toward others regardless of outcome or circumstances. Genuinely a kind teammate, competitor, and human being. I'll truly miss him," he said.

The bronze medalist in the team triathlon competition of the 2003 Pacific Games in Suva, Fiji also said Kabiriel's premature passing due to oral cancer should serve as a cautionary tale.

"I suspected, at some point, he would have challenges from his liking of betel nut and cigarettes," he said, even as the CNMI is observing April as Oral Cancer Awareness Month.

RONALD

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at least one 10K run) and a bike workout of 42 kilometers.

Aside from the 32K solo run, the CCM32 Challenge also had

a 32K two-man relay, 16K solo run, 8K fun run, and 4K fun run.

Villafria's next challenge is a 16-km run in Baguio City on April 23. It will be followed by a 10K run in Manila on May 14, before a 70-km ultramarathon

on May 20.

He is currently taking up EIM Electrical Installation Maintenance courses under the Technical Education And Skills Development Authority in Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija,



UConn holds off
late San Diego
State surge in title
victory
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Group 2
runners
take to the
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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Pangilinan, Torres win badminton doubles

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Over 140 participants from the CNMI and Guam joined the 50th Tan Holdings Badminton Tournament over a span of four days from last Thursday to Sunday, with Saipan's Jordan Pangilinan and Joseph Torres claiming the open men's doubles championship.



In a whirlwind three-set championship bout that prolonged the awarding ceremony late Sunday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium, CNMI National Badminton Team player Pangilinan and doubles partner Torres put everyone at the edge of their seats as they pried the win away from Andreau Galvez and Lance Gallardo.

The first set went to Galvez and Gallardo, 21-19, then Pangilinan and Torres came back in the second set for a 21-17 run. In the last set, Pangilinan and Torres had the upper hand and momentum swiftly made it a 20-10 game.

However, the tandem of Galvez and Gallardo did not give up without a fight and with a series of quick smashes aimed at the feet of Pangilinan and Torres, it caused them to fumble and make mistakes in their returns—prolonging the



LEIGH GASES
Jordan Pangilinan, left, returns as doubles partner Joseph Torres waits during the last set of their championship game in the open division men's doubles of the 50th Tan Holdings Badminton Tournament last Sunday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

only 1-point more victory by another 10 minutes.

From a 10-point deficit, Galvez and Gallardo rose from the ashes and made it a 20-14 game. The short-and-tall duo shutout Pangilinan and Torres four more times for a 20-18 game. When it seemed like they would pull the upset and grab the win from their grasp, in just a 10-second rally, Torres made the winning smash to Gallardo—who missed for the 21-18 victory.

Torres, a 28-year-old, who was clearly fatigued from the fight to the finish said that they have challenged Galvez and

Gallardo previously, so it was like deja vu for them. When asked what happened at the end—with just one point away from the win and the other team catching up, he said it was “overconfidence. But it's okay, we still got it.”

The 26-year-old Pangilinan said that he made quite a few mistakes in the last set. “It was a good game. I kept making errors and just tried to get back,” he said. “It was really hard as I was out for a month and trying to get back, it was not an easy task.”

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CNMI's 'unsung warrior' laid to rest

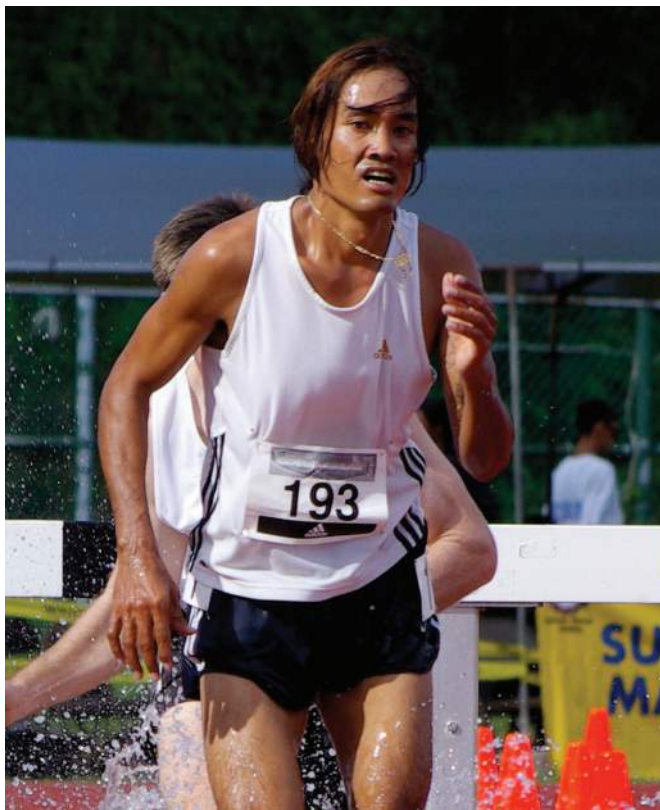
By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

CNMI Sports Hall of Fame inductee Kurt Barnes says with the passing of Ketson “Jack” Kabiriel, the islands lost an unsung warrior and arguably its most versatile athlete.

Kabiriel was laid to rest last Monday, eight days after succumbing from oral cancer last March 25. He was just 47 years old.

“The CNMI just lost an unsung warrior, probably the most versatile athlete to come along in the last 30 years. Not only versatile in his athletic achievements, Jack was also a very happy individual and always has a smile on his face. Nothing seemed to ever bother him. He also represented the CNMI in paddling, triathlons, volleyball, and all the decathlon/heptathlon events such as the hurdles, shot put, high jump, long jump, and javelin,” said Barnes, who used to administer fun run events on island and worked at Northern Marianas College before returning to California in 2017.

Years after retiring from athletics and transitioning to volleyball, triathlon, and eventually outrigger canoe,



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Ketson “Jack” Kabiriel in action during his heyday in the 3,000m steeplechase at the Oleai track and field.

Kabiriel continued to have a stranglehold on two CNMI national track records—800m (2:06.88) and triple jump (12.28m/40 feet and 3.5 inches).

“He leaves a legacy of sheer dominance in road racing and

track and field events. He also holds the CNMI's records in 800m and the triple jump. At one time he also held the 3,000m steeplechase record. He was the very first Micronesian to medal in the steeplechase by winning a silver med-

al in 2008, during the Oceania Athletics Championships. He also won many road races over the years,” said Barnes, who also used to be president of Northern Marianas Athletics.

Kabiriel is also listed in the *Sports Legends of Micronesia* that Barnes authored. The coffee table book, published in 2012, traced back sports statistics as early as the 1960s.

The aforementioned silver medal in 3,000m steeplechase in the 2008 Oceania Athlet-

ics Championships on Saipan was when Barnes' most indelible memory of Kabiriel was formed.

“My fondest memory of him would be when he medaled in the 3,000m steeplechase during the Oceania

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Ronald shaves 32 minutes off 32K PB

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Another month. Another milestone for Run Saipan member Ronald Villafria.

The 52-year-old longtime Saipan resident continued his very active and long-busting lifestyle by completing the CCM32 Challenge's 32-kilometer solo run last Sunday in Clark City, Pampanga in the Philippines.

Villafria outdid himself this time, finishing with an unofficial time of 2:56.55. That time was coincidentally 32 minutes faster than his previous record in the 32K distance.

“I'm happy with my improvement. My marked improvement in every race is extra motivation to keep on doing this running hobby of

mine,” he said.

As well as breaking his personal bests in every race, Villafria also finds joy in seeing new faces and getting to know them in every race he joins.

“Meeting different people from different places is another enjoyable moment for me.”

He went on to dedicate his successful completion of the CCM32 Challenge to his family and all the shoe donors that heeded his recent call for equipment sponsorship.

“I want to dedicate this to my wife Lorna and my family, my running group on Saipan and Nueva Ecija, and special thanks to Jerry Tan for giving me two new pairs of shoes as well as others who are donating and have already donated,” he said.



Villafria

Tan is the president of Northern Marianas Sports Association as well as the president and CEO of Tan Holdings, the parent company of Kanoa Resort, where Villafria used to work.

Villafria's current training regimen includes running six times a week

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